

MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

23 SEPTEMBER 2008

Present:

Councillors:

T.W. Crabb
D.L. McShane
E. O'Hara
Mrs. J.M. Pinkerton
G.F. Trussler

Independent members:

Mr M. Litvak (Chairman)
Miss Sue Faulkner (Vice-Chairman)

Also in attendance: Councillor C.A. Davis – Executive Portfolio Holder for Regeneration [including specific responsibility, as the lead Executive Member, for promoting standards in public life].

299/08 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2008 were approved as a correct record.

300/08 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

No disclosures were made.

301/08 REVIEW OF THE PLANNING CODE

The Committee discussed the current planning code to see whether a further review was warranted. Although the code was only last reviewed in September 2006, the Chairman of the Planning Committee had suggested there might be areas in which the code could be supplemented or improved. The Chairman of the Planning Committee put forward various suggested alterations, which he felt would assist him in the conduct of meetings and would help members of the Planning Committee in their work. The Committee in considering the changes felt that it would be appropriate to obtain the views of the Planning Committee prior to making any decision.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Monitoring Officer proceeds with a review of the Planning Code and prepares a revised draft, containing additional commentary and the suggested alterations to the code, for circulation to Committee members and the Planning Committee for their views, prior to further consideration by the Committee at a meeting to be arranged in November/December 2008.
- (2) That the Monitoring Officer investigates the logistics of arranging a visit by Committee members to a planning committee meeting at the London Borough of Camden.

302/08 PROCEDURES FOR INITIAL ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS

The Committee discussed with the Monitoring Officer a report introducing procedures for the assessment of complaints by the three new Sub-Committees of the Standards Committee [i.e. Assessment, Review and Determination], under the Member Code of Conduct to be made locally by the Committee.

The establishment of the three new Sub-Committees would be subject to approval by the Council on 30 October 2008.

The Monitoring Officer advised that Appendix 1 to his report provided a framework within which complaints under the Member Code of Conduct could be assessed. This framework took into account the guidance issued by the Standards Board for England. The framework dealt with the initial assessment and reviews. The Committee put forward some suggested alterations to the framework and procedures shown at Appendix 1.

RESOLVED:

- (1) To adopt the procedures, as amended by the Committee, for the initial assessment and review of complaints, as described in Appendix 1 to the report of the Monitoring Officer.
- (2) That in the absence of both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the Council meeting on 30 October 2008, Councillor C.A. Davis – Executive Portfolio Holder for Regeneration be authorised to present the Recommendations of the Committee and the Report of the Chairman of the Committee to the Council.