
STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19th APRIL 2010

Present:

Members of the Council

Councillors Barnes-Andrews, Mizon (items 16-20), Osmond and Slade.

Independent Members

Mr David Blake, Mr Brian Hooper (Chair) and Mr Geoff Wilkinson

Apologies

Councillors Baston, Burke and Ms Katerina Mesmer

16. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Standards and Governance Committee held on 15th December, 2009 be approved and signed as a correct record. (Copy of Minutes circulated with agenda and appended to the signed Minutes).

17. **CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The Committee considered the report of the Solicitor to the Council seeking comments and views on the draft report to be presented at the Annual General Council Meeting in May 2010. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

The Committee particularly noted the proposals that the financial threshold for key decisions would be raised to £500,000 and that the delegated financial thresholds set in the Officer Scheme of Delegation would also be raised. Concern was expressed in relation to how Members would be aware that officer non key decisions were to be made.

RESOLVED that the Solicitor to the Council consider this matter prior to the final report going to the Annual General Council Meeting and update the meeting orally.

18. **ANNUAL STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

The Committee received and noted the report of the Chair of Standards and Governance Committee seeking comments and views on the draft report to be presented at the Annual General Council Meeting in May 2010. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

The Committee noted that this was the first Annual Report of the Standards and Governance Committee and had been written in response to a recommendation from the Ethical Governance Review. There were no further comments and the report was duly approved.

19. **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, DATA PROTECTION AND REGULATION**

OF INVESTIGATORY POWER ACTS: ANNUAL REVIEW 2009-10

The Committee considered the report of the Solicitor to the Council detailing statistical information for the financial year 2009-10, the fifth year of implementation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and associated legislation. The report also detailed statistical information on requests received under the Data Protection Act (DPA) and the Council's activity under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA). (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

The Committee noted the sharp increase in the volume of requests received during 2009/10 together with the increased complexity associated with many of the requests and acknowledged the excellent response time in the majority of cases. The increase in officer time spent within Legal Services was noted and it was acknowledged that it was extremely difficult to measure officer time spent within other Directorates.

RESOLVED that the Solicitor to the Council be requested to maintain as far as possible an account of the hours of officer time spent on responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and associated legislation.

20. **CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE - UPDATE**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Solicitor to the Council on the updated Code of Corporate Governance. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

The Committee questioned whether or not this report was necessary in view of the Audit Commission's Use of Resources Key Line of Inquiry which contained very similar information.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Assistant Solicitor to the Council be requested to inquire with the Audit Commission if this report was necessary in the future;
- (ii) that the draft Code of Corporate Governance be approved, subject to the third column entitled "Cross Reference with CCG" being deleted and the insertion of a reference to the Officer Register of Interests being available.

21. **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT**

The Committee received and noted the report of the Solicitor to the Council detailing the 3 year Member Development Strategy. (Copy of the report circulated with the agenda and appended to the signed minutes).

Concern was expressed by some Committee Members at the attendance level at Member training sessions and the Members' Services Officer offered to supply the Committee with details, although it was acknowledged that

quasi-judicial work was the only compulsory element of training. It was recommended that Members should be encouraged to attend training whenever possible.

22. **STANDARD AND GOVERNANCE MEETING DATES FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR 2010-2011**

The Committee approved the following dates for meetings in the municipal year 2010-2011:

Thursday 24th June 2010, 3.00pm
Thursday 23rd September 2010, 3.00pm
Tuesday 14th December 2010, 3.00pm
Monday 18th April 2011, 3.00pm