

London Borough of Islington
Standards Committee – 11th October 2004

Non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held at the Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 11th October 2004.

Present: Father Jim Kennedy, John Gilbert, Jo Michie and Councillors Derek Sawyer and Terry Stacy

Councillor Terry Stacy in the Chair

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR MEETING

RESOLVED:

Councillor Stacy to chair the meeting as Father Kennedy would be late.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

Apologies for lateness were received from Father Kennedy.

3. DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

None.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Item 3)

None.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26th May 2004 be confirmed and the Chair authorised to sign them.

6. NEW INDEPENDENT MEMBER

The Chair welcomed John Gilbert, new independent member to the Committee. The Chair also welcomed Eddie Sheehy to the meeting who was part of the CPA inspection team.

7. STANDARDS AND ETHICS INDICATORS (Item 6)

RESOLVED:

- (i) That officers report back to the Committee on statistics on disciplinary action relating to officers in respect of breaches of the Member/Officer protocol and fraud.
- (ii) That officers provide John Gilbert with Standards and Ethics Indicators covering last year.

In relation to the current Islington case which had been referred to an Adjudication Panel, the Director of Law and Public Services advised that a hearing had been provisionally set for the 6th December for two weeks. However, given the length of the report, representations had been made to give more time before the hearing and for it to last up to six weeks given the complexities of the case.

The Council had requested that it be represented at the hearing since the case involved the appointment of the Head of the Paid Service.

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The Council would be there purely on matters of law procedure and process, not to represent the Councillors concerned as they had separate representation arranged themselves. The Council is awaiting the decision of the Tribunal on that matter.

Figures for Quarter 3 relating to Ombudsman cases were circulated at the meeting.

8. **SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE (Item 7)**

RESOLVED:

- (i) That officers advise the IDeA knowledge site of the best practice of the Committee in respect of the reporting and monitoring of Standards and Ethics Indicators in the authority.
- (ii) That officers ensure John Gilbert receives the e-mail alerts from the Standards Board.

Noted that the report would be presented to the Council on 30th November 2004 by the Chair.

9. **THIRD ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE (Item 8)**

The report be noted.

10. **SECTION 66 REGULATIONS (Item 9)**

The Director of Law and Public Services advised that following a telephone call to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister they had stated that the regulations would be published on the 14th October 2004.

In respect of powers in relation to indemnity and insurance, which authorities were consulted about over the summer, no indication could be given by the ODPM as to when legislation on this would be published.

11. **ODPM CONSULTATION PAPER ON MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND A REVIEW OF THE RESTRICTIONS ON THE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF LOCAL AUTHORITY EMPLOYEES AND PAY OF POLITICAL ASSISTANTS (Item 10)**

RESOLVED:

That officers circulate a proposed response to the consultation papers, to members of the Committee incorporating any comments received, at the beginning of November to allow any final changes to be made before the closing date of 19th November.

The following comments were noted:

The current threshold of P04 needed to be raised to reflect pay levels within London, which were higher than elsewhere. There may be some posts where the nature and function of the post should be taken into account regardless of the pay scale.

In terms of pay of Political Assistants, this should still be borne by the local authority rather than political groups.

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The role of the Independent Adjudicator should be carried out by local Standards Committees on the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

Clarification was needed as to who was an employee in respect of those on secondment from other organisations, and the complexities of relationships within new ways of working e.g. contracted out services, joint arrangements with other boroughs, joint commissioning and location of services e.g. PCT. Consideration also ought to be given to the position of agency staff.

A clear definition of 'friend' needed to be established for that provision to be workable. It was felt that the one proposed was probably acceptable.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

The meeting ended at 8.00pm.

CHAIR

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