

London Borough of Islington
Standards Committee – 11th October 2005

Non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held at the Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 11th October 2005.

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

Father Jim Kennedy in the Chair

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item 1)

None.

2. DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item 2)

None.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (Item 3)

None.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2005 be confirmed and the Chair authorised to sign them.

5. FEEDBACK ON INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN (Item 5)

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Chief Internal Auditor report back to the Committee in respect of their follow up to Property Disposals.

(2) The Chief Internal Auditor report to Committee on the results of his officer questionnaire in relation to financial governance within the authority.

Noted that in respect of Agency Payments there was now Limited Assurance and this would be reviewed again in the early part of next year.

Noted that a project was underway in the Legal and Property Department on the Property Departments that would hopefully match up all the property/land that the Council owned.

6. STANDARDS AND ETHICS INDICATORS (Item 6)

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Standards and Ethics Indicators be noted.

(2) That the Director of Law and Public Services write to Councillor Sawyer explaining what S.44 of the Freedom of Information Act covered.

Noted that Islington were one of the few authorities that published a Freedom of Information disclosure log on their website.

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In respect of objections to the Council's accounts it was reported that the District Auditor had received a proposed objection to the 2003/04 accounts along the same lines the objection to the 2001/02 and 2002/03 accounts. The Auditor had advised that it would not be appropriate for him to determine his approach to the matter until the previous objections had been determined.

A report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on the analysis of the Ethical Governance Audit responses that was currently being undertaken by the Audit Commission at the request of this Committee.

7. FEEDBACK FROM THE ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF STANDARDS COMMITTEES (Item 7)

The Chair, Councillor Stacy and John Lynch all attended the Annual Assembly in Birmingham.

Overall the Assembly was disappointing and it was clear that this authority's Standards Committee were leading the way in terms of best practice.

John Lynch had written to the Chief Executive of the Standards Board, setting out in detail the good practice that was undertaken at Islington for dissemination to other Standards Committees.

Councillor Stacy had been asked to join the Steering Group to plan next year's Assembly and Father Jim had been asked to co-ordinate a London-wide Independent Members Group.

8. REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (Item 8) RESOLVED:

(1) That the report be noted.

(2) That officers investigate whether a standard legal condition could be built into new contracts in respect of RIPA requirements.

(3) Councillor Sawyer and Jo Michie be sent a copy of the revised RIPA procedural guidance that had been produced.

(4) The Scrutiny Report on CCTV be submitted to this Committee following the Executive's consideration of the matter.

Noted that all the recommendations made by the Office of the Surveillance Commissioner following a recent inspection had been implemented.

9. ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER (Item 9) RESOLVED:

That the progress made in addressing the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter for 2004 be noted.

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**10. DRAFT THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE (Item 10)
RESOLVED:**

That the draft report be agreed subject to adding in details that Councillor Stacy had been asked to join the Steering Group for planning the 2006 Annual Standards Assembly and Father Jim had been asked to co-ordinate a London-wide Independent Members Group.

11. ANY URGENT BUSINESS

None.

The Committee would consider their response to any recommendations by the Case Tribunal currently being heard together with the report already published in relation to ex-Councillor Creagh when they announced their decision in due course.

12. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 12th January 2006 at 7.00pm.

The meeting ended at 8.10pm.

CHAIR

Contact Officer: John Lynch
Designation: Head of Scrutiny & Democratic Services
Telephone No.: 020-7527 3002
Fax No.: 020-7527 3092
E-mail: john.lynch@islington.gov.uk