

**London Borough of Islington**  
**Standards Committee – 19th June 2006**

Non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held at the Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 19th June 2006

**Present:** Father Jim Kennedy and Jo Michie  
Councillors Terry Stacy and Richard Watts

**Also** Councillor Barry Edwards  
**Attended**

**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)**

Father Jim Kennedy declared that he had been asked to write a character reference for both ex-Councillors Margot Dunn and Dorrie Valery in connection with the Case Tribunal, which he had done so as he had known both individuals for quite some time.

Councillor Watts declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in the fact that he worked closely with ex-Councillor Mary Creagh.

**4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Item 4)**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30th March 2006 be confirmed as a correct record and the Chair authorised to sign them.

**5. ANTI FRAUD AND CORRUPTION POLICY (Item 5)**

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Work Plan be endorsed.

(2) Officers send Councillor Watts a copy of the Audit Commission Report into the Council's procurement procedures.

Noted that Corporate Services Committee had agreed the policy at their last meeting with the following amendments:

- The inclusion of a Members' Workshop in the programme
- Corporate Services Committee being the responsible member body
- The Code being amended to read 'The Islington Members' Code of Conduct'.

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**6. ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION PLAN FOR 2006/07 (Item 6)**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Audit and Inspection Plan for 2006/07 be endorsed.

**7. PROGRESS AGAINST THE INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2005/06 (Item 7)**

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

Councillor Stacy declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest as a Council appointed Chair of Governors of one of the schools outlined in Appendix B.

Noted that in future reports would include a summary that would outline what action departments were taking on issues.

**8. ETHICS AND STANDARDS INDICATORS (Item 8)**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Ethics and Standards Indicators be noted.

The second paragraph on page 3 of the report was amended to read 'Children's Services' instead of 'Social Services'.

**9. MEMBERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR 2006/07 (Item 9)**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Training and Development Programme for 2006/07 be agreed, subject to adding training on Community Leadership.

**10. WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMITTEE FOR 2006/07 (Item 10)**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Work Programme for the Committee for 2006/07 be agreed subject to adding in promoting Civic Life.

Noted that discussions were underway with CEA about involving schools in Local Democracy Week (16th to 20th October 2006) together with raising the profile of registering to vote and citizenship issues generally and engaging with young people.

**11. ANY URGENT BUSINESS (Item 11)**

The Chair agreed to take the following report as a matter of urgency as the matter was being considered by the Executive on the 22nd June and it would be helpful to have this Committee's views on the matter to pass on to the Executive.

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### (a) Indemnification of costs

#### RESOLVED:

(1) The Committee notes

1.1 The views of Sir Anthony Holland, the Chair of the Standards Board in his letter dated 20th March to ex-Councillor Steve Hitchins in which he stated 'The Board's view is that the unfortunate situation in which you and your fellow Councillors now find yourselves is the sort of situation that was intended to be covered by The Indemnities Order. It is most undesirable that members, who have been cleared of any wrong doing, should be left with a large personal financial burden by virtue of their public office.'

1.2 That had this been a criminal or civil case then costs would have been awarded.

1.3 That one of the duties of this Committee was to promote public life and if Councillors were to be made personally liable for cases where they had been subsequently cleared and were not indemnified this would make it harder to attract people to stand for local office and;

(a) **Recommends** that the authority indemnifies Councillor Vaja and ex-Councillors Hitchins, Dunn, Fox, Valery and Creagh in respect of their legal costs except in those cases where the costs were paid by a third party or where it amounted to a donation; subject to the Director of Corporate Resources being satisfied that the costs themselves were reasonable.

(b) **Recommends** that the authority indemnifies the Chief Executive in respect of her legal costs subject to the Director of Corporate Resources being satisfied that the costs themselves were reasonable.

(2) That the Director of Corporate Resources write to the Secretary of State to ask whether the Government intends to issue the order to give the power to Case Tribunals to award costs and if so, when will this be made.

(3) Officers check with the insurers whether they would be prepared to extend the insurance to cover claims arising in the course of future recruitment processes.

Following discussion on the matter Father Jim Kennedy, Jo Michie and Councillor Stacy voted in favour of recommendations 1.3(a) and 1.3(b).

Councillor Watts voted against recommendation 1.3(a) stating that his Group did not feel that this was the best use of public money and the authority should not be indemnifying these individuals. He advised that ex-Councillor Creagh's costs had all been paid for by the Labour Party.

Councillor Watts abstained from recommendation 1.3(b) advising that his Group had not yet decided their position on this matter.

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The meeting ended at 8.30pm

### CHAIR

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