



Minutes of the Standards Committee

11 June 2009

-: Present :-

Councillors Addis and Doggett

Town Councillor Henderson, (Brixham Town Council)

Messers Bastow, Dalzell, Heath, Hutchinson and Ms Faryna (Independent Members)

68. Election of Chairman/woman.

Mr Heath was elected as Chairman for the 2009/2010 Municipal Year.

Mr Heath in the Chair

69. Apologies.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Aiton and Stocks and Town Councillors Killick and Lomas.

70. Appointment of Vice-Chairman.

Mr Dalzell was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.

71. Minutes.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 19 March 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

72. Terms of Reference of Standards Committee and Appointment of Standards Sub-Committees.

Members received and noted the terms of reference for the Standards Committee (Report 119/2009) which had been adopted at the adjourned meeting of the Council held on 13 May 2009.

Resolved:

- (i) that a Referrals Sub-Committee be established with the membership and Terms of Reference set out in Report 119/2009;
- (ii) that a Review Sub-Committee be established with the membership and Terms of Reference set out in Report 119/2009;
- (iii) that a Hearings Sub-Committee be established with the membership

and Terms of Reference set out in Report 119/2009;

- (iv) that a Standards Appointments Sub-Committee be established with the membership and Terms of Reference set out in Report 119/2008;

73. The Role of the Standards Committee.

The Committee received a presentation from the Executive Head for People and Corporate on the 'Torbay Plc' Commissioning Model detailing the background to the formation of the Strategic Commissioning Partnerships. It was hoped that the new commissioning model would bring greater understanding across organisations in the Bay and an alignment of priorities to help meet the needs of the area. Members sought clarification as to who the responsible authority would be should any complaints arise. The Committee agreed that they were willing to provide advice and support to the Strategic Commissioning Partnerships.

The Committee proceeded to receive Report 120/2009 which sought to improve standards of probity and to boost public trust and confidence in the Council. The Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that the Standards Board for England and the Audit Commission encourages Standards Committees to be proactive and demonstrate that they are at the forefront of maintaining and improving high standards of conduct particularly in relation to members and sought approval to develop the options set out in Report 120/2009.

Resolved:

that options (xv) and (xiv) as set in paragraph A1.2 of Report 120/2009 be developed.

74. Update on National Developments.

Members noted Report 121/2009 which provided statistical information regarding the number of complaints received nationally. Report 121/2009 also provided Members with an overview of emerging issues that had been highlighted by the Standards Board for England.

75. The Adjudication Panel.

Members received and noted Report 122/2009 which provided examples of cases where Adjudication Panel Tribunals had been undertaken and would aid Members of Torbay Council's Standards Committee in furthering its objective of making sound and equitable decisions. Members requested that further case studies be presented to future meetings of the Committee.

76. Standards Board Bulletin – 43.

Members received the latest edition of the Standards Board for England's Bulletin as set out in Report 57/2009. The Bulletin provided useful information and guidance regarding ethical standards and Standards Committees.

77. Standards Board for England Annual Return.

The Committee noted Report 124/2009 which set out the Council's annual return to the Standards Board for England. Members questioned why the register of gifts and hospitality was not published on the website. Members were assured that the register of gifts and hospitality would be published on the website in the future with the register of Members' interests.

Chairman
