

Standards Committee Observations of Council Meetings

Meeting Attended: Council Meeting

Date: 14 December 2010

Venue: Ballroom, Oldway

Agenda Item	Chair's Action	Members Action(s)	Remarks
1 – 4. Prayer, Apologies, Minutes & Declaration of Interest	By the book	Appropriate	No problems
5. Communications & Announcements	By the book	N/A	A bit optimistic on anticipated timing, but understandable given Government announcement on funding cuts.
6. Petition	By the book	N/A	Petitioner advised as to what would happen next
7. Questions	Firm control	Appropriate	Chair showed his teeth for the first time, by reminding members to stand whilst addressing the assembly.
8. Motions	Took very firm control of a debate that was getting out of hand. Used such phrases as "Frivolity" and "Out of control"	Whole episode descended into farce. Some members did not appear to understand the issue.	One has to agree with the subsequent Herald Express view that it was turning into an unedifying pantomime before intervention of the Chair.
9. Enterprise Centre at Bishop's Place.	By the book	Drifted off the subject a bit, but otherwise OK.	
10. Capital Strategy	By the book, and with firm rebuke to any member out of order.	Reasonable	All good stuff
11. Licensing	By the book	All very quiet	
12. Economic Strategy	Good control, including "timing out" one over-enthusiastic speaker.	Appropriate	
13. Council Tax	By the book	Some members getting restless at this point with a few private	

		conversations going on	
14. Remuneration Committee.	By the book	Appropriate	
15. Standards Committee Annual Review	By the book	N/A	

General Comments:

1. As usual, these comments are outside the strict remit of the Standards Committee as we did not observe any flagrant breach of the Members' Code of Conduct.
2. The guidance notes/script was again obviously very useful to the Chair, but he clearly had a very good grasp of Standing Orders and appropriate protocols and was not afraid to use them on several occasions.
3. The behaviour of members during Agenda Item 8 has been accurately described in the local press and possibly verged on bringing the assembly into disrepute. However, apart from the petitioner, the few members of the public present appeared to be "political" observers and probably enjoyed the spectacle.