

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**27th March 2008 at 12.30 p.m.**

PRESENT: Councillors Neale, Titmuss and Worliding, Mr. J. Jones (Chair), Mrs. M. Briggs, Mr. J. Hearnshaw, Mrs. J. Spendley and Ms. S. Wright (Independent Members).

### **5 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE (REF: 1)**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Bailey and Dolling.

### **6 MINUTES (REF: 2.1)**

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **7 REVIEW OF CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS (REF: 7)**

The Committee reviewed the Code of Conduct for Members and considered a report from the Monitoring Officer on the matter. The Committee were advised that the previous Code of Conduct had ceased to apply on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2007, when the current Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council came into effect.

The Committee were advised that during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006 to 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2007, there had been no allegations to the Standards Board for England (SBE) under the previous Code which had been referred for investigation. The Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that, during this period, three allegations had been made to the SBE but these had not been referred for investigation. The Monitoring Officer's report indicated that, during the period from 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2007 to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008, one allegation to the SBE had been made that an elected member had breached the current Code, and that this had been referred on to an Ethical Standards Officers for investigation, and that this investigation was on going. The nature of the allegation was summarized in the report. The Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that an allegation that an elected member had breached the current Code had recently been made to the SBE, alleging that the member concerned had failed to treat others with respect, but that this allegation had not been referred for investigation. The Monitoring Officer further advised that he had received no notification of any further allegation to the SBE alleging that there had been a breach of the current Code of the current Code between 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008 and the date of the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer referred to training previously provided, to members and indicated that further training would be necessary, particularly for Members of the Standards Committee once the details of how the Local

Assessment of Allegations would operate had been finalized through statutory Regulations.

Councillor Neale suggested that training on the current Code should be made compulsory.

The Monitoring Officer replied that training could not legally be made compulsory, in the sense that sanctions could be imposed for non-attendance, although the political groups could agree not to nominate members for appointments unless they had received training.

The Committee took the view that there were no significant issues to address in relation to the operation of the Code.

**Resolved:** That the report (Ref: 7) be noted.

**(Note: The meeting ended at 12.47 p.m.)**