

## **Standards Committee**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2009**

#### **Present:**

Mr Snadden In the Chair  
Councillors Burns, Evans, O'Callaghan, Sandiford.  
Mrs E Carmichael, Mrs A. Isles

#### **Apologies for absence**

Councillors Ali, Firth, Whitmore

#### **ST/09/11 Minutes**

##### **Decision**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2009.

#### **ST/09/12 The Monitoring Report**

The report of the City Solicitor set out the outcome of complaints regarding members of the Council that had been referred to the Committee over the previous twelve months, and the Deputy Monitoring Officer updated the Committee on the outcome of two assessments which had taken place after the report had been prepared. In the period six complaints were made and, an Assessment Sub Committee had now considered all of these. Three complaints had been referred to the Monitoring Officer for further investigation; one had been referred to the Monitoring Officer for other action; in relation to the other two complaints the decision was to take no further action (in one case this is subject to any request for a review).

##### **Decision**

To note the decisions in relation to complaints against members of the Council during the period 1 November 2008 to 31 October 2009.

#### **ST/09/13 Independent Members' Term of Office**

The report of the City Solicitor explained how work was underway to investigate amendments to members' terms of office to take account of guidance from Standards for England.

Councillors on the Committee were supportive of the terms of appointment for independent members being extended to four years for all future appointments in accordance with the Standards for England Guidance. They also agreed that

appointments should continue to be staggered to ensure some continuity of experienced independent members.

In discussion of the transitional arrangements, the Deputy Monitoring Officer advised members that the position in relation to the terms of existing independent members would be reported back to a future meeting.

[Mr Snadden, Mrs E Carmichael and Mrs A. Isles were not present for this discussion].

### **Decision**

1. To note the report.
2. To request that a report be prepared on the position regarding the existing independent members for a future meeting of the Committee.

### **ST/09/14 Annual Assembly of Standards Committees – 12/13 October 2009**

The Chair invited members of the Standards Committee to give feedback on the Annual Assembly of Standards Committees on 12 and 13 October 2009.

Members commented that the event had been interesting and informative but had also been dominated by long plenary sessions including the future of Standards for England and case studies in relation to two authorities. Members had found the breakout discussion sessions particularly interesting but they were less impressed with the formal plenary sessions and would like to suggest that the balance between the two types of session should be altered.

### **Decision**

To note the report of the members who had attended the Assembly.

### **ST/09/15 Standards Board Training - Local Assessment**

The Committee viewed part of a training DVD produced by Standards for England to inform members about Local Assessments. It was agreed that several additional copies of the training DVD would be ordered for members to borrow from Democratic Services.