

# MINUTES

meeting: **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

date: **14 JUNE 2012**

## **PRESENT:-**

Councillors Jaspal, Mrs Mills, O'Neill and Wynne  
Mr R Aithal and Mr R C Tyler-Morris (Independent Members)

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:-**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors T Singh and Turner; Mr J Harris, Mr G W Hurd, Mr A W Lee and Mr W A Parker

## **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:-**

### Delivery Directorate

L Banbury	-	Democratic Support Officer
F Davis	-	Head of Service (Regeneration & Governance)

**Wolverhampton**  
City Council



**Election of Vice Chair**

- 5 Resolved:-  
That Mr K R Aithal be elected as Vice-Chair of this Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

In the absence of Mr Parker, Mr Aithal assumed the Chair for the meeting

**Declarations of Interest**

- 6 No interests were declared.

**Minutes**

- 7 Resolved:-  
That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2012 be approved as a correct record.

**Dates and Times of Meetings**

- 8 Resolved:-  
That meetings of the Committee be held in the Civic Centre at 1500 hours as follows:-
- 26 July 2012
  - 13 September 2012
  - 15 November 2012
  - 10 January 2013 (will follow immediately after joint meeting with Audit Committee)
  - 14 March 2013

**Schedule of Outstanding Minutes (Appendix 3)**

The Democratic Support Officer submitted a report, which set out a schedule of outstanding minutes, together with an indication as to when it was expected that reports on individual items would be presented for consideration.

- 9 Resolved:-  
That the report be received.

**Councillors' Code of Conduct/Independent Persons (Appendix 4)**

The Head of Service (Regeneration and Governance) presented a report, which sought endorsement to measures required to implement that part of the Localism Act relating to the Councillors' Code of Conduct. An addendum to the report was circulated at the meeting, which advised that the Commencement Order had been made to bring the new Standards arrangements under the Localism Act 2011 into force on 1 July 2012. The addendum also detailed that the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 had been made and would also come into force on 1 July 2012.

During the ensuing discussion, Members requested clarification on the situation regarding disclosable interests in regard to membership on outside bodies and of housing tenancies.

10 Resolved:-

(a) That the details of two examples of a Councillors' Code of Conduct, consistent with the 'Nolan Principles' of standards in public life be noted and that a trawl of other authorities' arrangements to be made to assist decision making.

(b) That the Monitoring Officer authorised to advertise a vacancy for the appointment of one Independent Person and two reserve Independent Persons to serve on the Standards Committee and that further consideration be given to the involvement of Standards Committee Members on the Appointments Committee, in light of Members' reservations expressed at the meeting. Subject to clarification, a recommendation to be made to full Council for appointment following short-listing and interview.

(c) That full Council be recommended to

- (i) approve the re-adoption on the implementation date of the new standards regime, the current Code of Conduct for Councillors and Co-opted Members as revised by the Monitoring Officer to reflect the mandatory requirements of the Localism Act 2011 in relation to Standards;
- (ii) authorise the Monitoring Officer to thereafter review the revised Code and prepare a report and draft Code for consideration by SAG and Standards Committee, with a view to recommending the adoption of the Code by full Council, and
- (iii) to adopt the provision of a transitional measure to appoint a person who is currently the Independent Chair or Independent Member of the existing Standards Committee as its 'Independent person' with the statutory role of giving views on any complaint about the conduct of a Councillor or Co-opted Member, pending the new appointments.
- (iv) That an Officer Appointments Committee be established to shortlist and interview candidates to act as Independent persons.

(d) Clarification to be made as to whether the arrangements for approval of the amendments to the constitution relating to the new Standards regime should be made via the Standards Committee or Cabinet.

(e) That the addendum relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests be noted and that a briefing note be circulated to all Members

of the Council to provide clarification on the disclosure of interests in regard to:-

- (i) Housing Tenancies
- (ii) Membership of Wolverhampton Homes Management Board
- (iii) Membership on Outside Bodies.