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TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING

Caddsdow Business Support Centre,
Caddsdow Business Park, Bideford

1st August 2008

PRESENT: Mr B Ormerod (Chairman)
Mr J Ager (Vice Chairman)
Mr R Clark, Mrs G Millman, Mr C Yipp and Mr M Riggulsford (Parish
Representatives)
Mr R De Crausaz, Venerable M Edson, Mr S Morgan and Mrs S Wragge-Morley
(Independent Representatives)
Mrs M Brown, G Lee, P Pennington and S Robinson (Torrige District
Councillors)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr K Miles (Solicitor and Monitoring Officer - Adviser to the Committee) and Ms
K Smith (Clerk to the Committee)

19 APOLOGIES

Apologies of absence from the meeting received on behalf of Councillor Mrs R Lock

20 MINUTES

That the minutes of the meeting held 20th June 2008, and amended as noted, be
confirmed as a correct record and signed. The Chairman to re-present the minutes at
the next Full Council meeting.

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No committee member made any declaration of interest at this point on the agenda.

22 URGENT MATTERS OF INFORMATION TO BE BOUGHT FORWARD WITH THE
PERMISSION OF THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMITTEE

Mr J Ager Vice Chairman informed the Committee that, as a result of pressures of work,
he would be retiring from the Standards Committee forthwith. The Chairman and
members thanked him for his services as the previous Chairman and wished him well for
the future.

The Monitoring Officer and Solicitor advised the Committee that the annual conference
would be held on the 13th and 14th October in Birmingham and three places had been
booked. He would be attending but to date no member of the committee had confirmed
their interest. He encouraged members to advise him as soon as possible if they wished
to attend. Mr Yipp was still considering his options and Mr R Clark expressed a desire to
go again in the absence of any other volunteers.

23 APPOINTMENT OF PARISH REPRESENTATIVE

The Chairman introduced Mr Myc Riggulsford, newly appointed Parish Representative and welcomed him to the Standards Committee.

24 AGREEMENT OF AGENDA PART I AND II

There were no part II items for discussion on the agenda.

25 ANNUAL REPORT

The Solicitor and Monitoring Officer presented the draft 2007/08 Standards Committee Annual Report for comments from Members prior to its publication.

Members reviewed the report and it was noted that;

- the names of members who attended the annual conference be included,
- that it be noted in the report that training was better attended than in previous years and that specific requests from Parishes had resulted,
- that in the previous year 40 complaints had been heard as opposed to 21 this year
- that it was confirmed that statistics were being collated for the current year and would show a full twelve months

RESOLVED:

That the report be approved subject to the amendments noted.

(Vote for – unanimous)

26 TRAINING

The Solicitor and Monitoring Officer introduced the training session, continued from a previous meeting. The committee then divided into its three sub-committee groups and - with the Solicitor and Monitoring Officer - discussed and reviewed two Standard Board cases and decisions.

The second case generated considerable discussion. Many of the committee felt that the behaviour outlined in the case was unacceptable and needed action but others felt that this had to be balanced against the not inconsiderable cost of an investigation and the possibility that either no breach of The Code would be found or the breach would be too insignificant to warrant a punishment. The committee also discussed the difficulty of letting the public see that the Standards Committee was carrying out its function in a responsible manner whilst on the other hand maintaining an appropriate level of confidentiality. During the discussions the Monitoring Officer noted that there were situations when inappropriate behaviour was brought to the attention of individual Councillors in an informal and private manner without the need for complaints and subsequent investigations.

It was agreed that training should continue at the next meeting when further Standards Board cases would be discussed.

(vote for – unanimous)

27 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Standards Committee – 1st August 2008

It was agreed that the date of the next Standards Committee meeting would be Friday 12th September 2008, at 10.00am (not as shown on the schedule).

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and ended at 12.00 pm.

Date Chairman