

# Minutes



To: All Members of the Standards Committee, Chief Executive, Chief Officers

From: Legal, Democratic & Statutory Services  
Ask for: Elaine Shell  
Ext: 25565

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## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE 9 FEBRUARY 2015**

### **ATTENDANCE**

### **MEMBERS OF THE PANEL**

R H Beeching (Vice-Chairman), N Bell, D J Hewitt (Chairman), A Plancey, D T F Scudder

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Standards Committee meeting on 9 February 2015 as circulated, copy annexed, conclusions were reached and are recorded below:

*Note: No conflicts of interest were declared by any member of the Committee in relation to the matters on which decisions were reached at this meeting.*

## **PART I ('OPEN') BUSINESS**

### **1. MINUTES**

- 1.1 The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 13 November 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **1A. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

#### Standards Regime – Update

- 1.2 At its last meeting the Committee had requested that a 'light-touch' review of the Council's Code of Conduct be conducted, in due course, in light of Government guidance and experience of the operation of the new standards regime.
- 1.3 Generally, the current Code of Conduct was considered to be working well. A report on the Code and its operation in relation to complaints made against Members of the Council would be brought to a the Committee in June 2015.

## **RESOLVED**

- 1.4 That a report on breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct, specifically in relation to complaints made against Members of the Council and action taken in respect of them, be presented to the Committee at its next meeting in June 2015\*.

\*date to be confirmed.

## **2. GENERAL DISPENSATIONS**

[Officer Contact: Kathryn Pettitt, Chief Legal Officer Tel: 01992 555527]

- 2.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced the concept of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests ('DPIs'). The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 defined those interests that would constitute DPIs under the 2011 Act; failure to register a DPI or to speak and/or vote on a matter where a Member had a DPI constituted a criminal offence, unless that Member had obtained a dispensation under one of the grounds specified in the 2011 Act for which a dispensation may be granted.
- 2.2 The Council had delegated the power to grant such dispensations to the Standards Committee.
- 2.3 The Chief Legal Officer recommended that such a dispensation should be granted to Members of the County Council in receipt of an allowance from the County Council, another local authority or a public body to which a Member had been appointed by the County Council, to enable them to participate and vote on the County Council's Integrated Plan (budget) and on Member allowances matters for the remainder of the current County Council.

## **RESOLVED:**

The Committee UNANIMOUSLY agreed:-

1. That a dispensation is granted pursuant to the Localism Act 2011 to allow all Members in receipt of an allowance:-
  - (a) under the Hertfordshire County Council Members' Allowances Scheme; or
  - (b) under the Members Allowances Scheme of another local authority in Hertfordshire; or
  - (c) from a body to which they have been appointed to by the Hertfordshire County Council

to participate in debate and vote on:-

**CHAIRMAN'S  
INITIALS**

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- (i) setting the council tax or a precept under the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended from time to time or any superseding legislation); and
- (ii) allowances, payments or indemnities given to Members of the Council.

- 2. That the dispensation mentioned in 1 above applies until the date of the next County Council election.
- 3. That the Chief Legal Officer be authorised to grant dispensations in relation to the matters set out in 1 above.

**3. OTHER PART I BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**KATHRYN PETTITT  
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**

**CHAIRMAN** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHAIRMAN'S  
INITIALS**

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