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KIRKLEES COUNCIL
STANDARDS COMMITTEE

22 June 2010

Present: Councillors Hardcastle, Patrick, C Smith, K Smith and Sokhal

Co-opted Members: Mr P Blythe (in the Chair), Councillor S Watson,
Councillor P Cunnington, Prof A Kitson, Mr D J Binns and Rev M Roberts

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Ridgway and
Councillor C Kaye

1 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - That the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2010 be approved as a correct record subject to the amendment of Minute 5(2) to reflect that the resolution sought to request that the updated schedule in future be classified in the same way as is done by Standards for England.

2 Interests

No interests were declared.

3 Admission of the Public

The Committee determined that all business would be considered in public session.

4 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

5 Public Question Time

No questions were asked.

6 Update on Complaints

The Monitoring Officer tabled a report which summarised the current complaint investigations. The Committee noted that six investigations were currently live and that the outcomes would be reported in due course.

RESOLVED - That the update on complaints be noted.

7 Recommendations to Corporate Governance and Audit Committee
The Monitoring Officer advised that the Licensing Protocol, submitted to a recent meeting of Corporate Governance and Audit Committee, had been approved. With regards to the Planning Protocol, the Committee were informed that discussions were ongoing and that an update would be submitted to the next meeting, following a meeting of the Monitoring Officer and the Chair of Corporate Governance and Audit Committee.

RESOLVED - That the update be noted.

8 Appointment of Spokesperson

RESOLVED - That Councillor C Smith be appointed as the Elected Member to act as spokesperson for the Standards Committee for the 2010/11 Municipal Year.

9 Appointment of Deputy Chair

RESOLVED - That Prof A Kitson be appointed as Deputy Chair of the Standards Committee for the 2010/11 Municipal Year.

10 Annual Report 2009/2010

The Committee received a copy of the Annual Report, prepared by the Chair of the Committee, which summarised the work of the Committee during 2009/10. The report also highlighted that

- * arrangements had been put in place to provide a framework for assessing complaints;
- * Members had continued to share best practice with other Councils at regional and national events;
- * Meetings between the Chair and the Chief Executive had helped to ensure a shared understanding of the Committees aims and achievements;
- * areas of improvement had been identified and would be phased in during 2010/2011.

The report indicated that, during 2009-2010, the Monitoring Officer had received 15 written complaints about Councillor conduct, 9 of which had been received from Members of the public. 15 Sub-Committees had been convened to consider the assessment of the complaints, the outcomes of which were detailed within the report.

RESOLVED - That the Annual Report be noted and referred to Council for information.

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Proposed Abolition of the Standards Regime

The Committee received a report which advised of the proposal to abolish the Standards Board Regime within the Decentralisation and Localism Bill.

The report set out the implications of the proposals for the Standards Committee and attached as an Appendix a letter from Standards for England setting out the position as at 1 June 2010.

Members noted that a recruitment exercise was currently underway to recruit two new independent members and it was suggested that this be progressed.

RESOLVED -

(1) That the report be noted.

(2) That a report be brought to the next meeting setting out the 2010/11 work and training programmes.

(3) That, due to the proposals for abolition, no arrangements currently be made for representatives to attend the 2010 Annual Assembly.

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Meeting with Chief Executive

The Chair provided the Committee with a verbal report following his meeting with the Chief Executive. He advised that the meeting had been productive and positive and that consideration would be given to arrangements in terms of meeting with the incoming Chief Executive in due course.

RESOLVED - That the verbal update be noted.

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Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on 12 October 2010.