



Standards Committee

24th June 2009

MINUTES

Present:

Independent Members:

D Andrews (Chair) and B Warwick

Borough Council Members:

Councillors A Clayton, M Hall, P Mould and J Pearce

Feckenham Parish Council Member:

Councillor J Matthews

Officer:

S Mullins

Committee Officer:

D Sunman

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted for Borough Councillors Fry and Norton and Mr M Collins (Independent Member).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

There were no minutes submitted for approval.

4. REVIEW OF DECLARATIONS OF GIFTS, HOSPITALITY AND INTERESTS

The Committee received a report on a review of gifts, hospitality and Interests made by Members in the last year and to review the Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality adopted by the Council on 13 August 2007.

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Chair

Officers reported that Appendix 1 to the report had not included information regarding Independent Members' and Parish Councillors' personal interests and apologised for the omission.

Members noted that there were large variances in the way individual Members registered their personal interests and that there seemed to be uncertainty around what should or should not be included.

It was reported that work is ongoing to investigate ways of placing the Register of Members' Interests on the Council's website so that public access is available on the Internet as well as through paper copies held at the Town Hall. Members expressed concern regarding the possibility of scanned signatures being included on the web-site.

Members were informed that only two declarations of interest had been made in the last two years in terms of gifts and hospitality. Officers reported that when the Council's Code of Conduct on Gifts and Hospitality was adopted it had been the intention that training would be provided for all Members. This training had not taken place.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the report be noted;**
- 2)
 - a) **a single document be compiled in order to enable a comparison of Member's responses when completing the Register of Interests form, which could be used in training;**
 - b) **investigations continue regarding publication of a Register of Interest on the web-site;**
- 3) **training and further guidance be provided to all Members on the declaration of personal interests, including interests arising from gifts and hospitality; and**
- 4) **a further review be carried out on the Register of Interests following completion of forms in 2010 following completion of training.**

5. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Members were informed that the Register of Interests forms had been distributed in the last week. To date 11 forms had been returned.

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6. CHAIR'S / MEMBERS' REPORTS

Members received a verbal report regarding conduct and procedure at a recent Planning Committee.

RESOLVED that

a number of Members attend Planning Committee to gain an overall impression of how the Committee is run and report to the next meeting.

7. PARISH COUNCIL REPORT (IF ANY)

There was no report from the Parish Council.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

Members received a report on the Committee's Work Programme for 2009/10. There were no additions to the Work Programme.

RESOLVED that

the report be received.

The Meeting commenced at 7.05 pm
and closed at 8.40 pm