

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY 2011 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Independent Members: Mr. N. A. Burke (Chairman) and Ms. K. J. Sharpe (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors: Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. (substituting for Miss D. H. Campbell JP) and D. L. Pardoe (substituting for Mrs. A. E. Doyle)
Parish Councils' Representatives: Mr. I. A. Hodgetts

Observers: Councillors Mrs. C. M. McDonald, P. M. McDonald and S. P. Shannon

Invitees: Ms. B. Evans, Legal Advisor

Officers: Ms. D. Parker-Jones

36/10 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs. G. Bell, Independent Member, and Mr. J. Cypher, Parish Councils' Representative.

It was noted that, as detailed on the agenda, District Councillors Miss. D. H. Campbell JP, Mrs. A. E. Doyle and E. C. Tibby, who comprise the normal District Councillor membership of the Committee, were affected by some of the issues under consideration and therefore were not participating in the meeting. District Councillors Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. and D. L. Pardoe substituted in their places.

37/10 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

38/10 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

The Committee considered whether or not to exclude the public from the consideration of Agenda Item No. 4; Member Complaints - Pre-Hearing Update. In doing so, the Chairman announced that the meeting be adjourned to take legal advice.

Accordingly, the meeting adjourned from 6.04pm to 6.35pm.

Having re-convened, the Chairman advised that the Committee had decided that the meeting would remain in closed session in line with the consideration meeting which had taken place on 17th December 2010. However, the

Committee invited the three Subject Members present, namely Councillors Mrs. C. M. McDonald, P. M. McDonald and S. P. Shannon, to remain in the room and listen to the proceedings. The Subject Members were provided with a copy of the confidential report relating to Agenda Item No. 4, which the Chairman highlighted remained confidential.

It was therefore

RESOLVED that under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public, save for the three Subject Members in attendance, be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended, the relevant paragraph of that part being as set out below, and that it is in the public interest to do so:

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph</u>
4	7C.

39/10 **MEMBER COMPLAINTS - PRE-HEARING UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report which summarised the current position, in accordance with Standards for England's suggested pre-hearing process, for the final determination hearing into the complaints against the members of the Labour Group which was scheduled to take place on 22nd February 2011. The meeting was purely procedural and sought to identify any decisions or directions the Committee wished to make in order to ensure that all parties were sufficiently well prepared for the hearing.

Members heard that following a response received from the Subject Members' representative there were still outstanding actions in relation to the pre-hearing process which had not been completed and which were needed before the Committee was in a position to proceed to a hearing

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) that the Subject Members' representative in conjunction with the Investigating Officer be asked to provide further clarity on those areas within the Investigating Officer's report which are at dispute, the areas which might be agreed and which witnesses need to be called to give evidence at the hearing, and that this information be provided by Friday 11th February 2011 at the latest; and
- (c) that should any further administrative and/or procedural matters arise as a consequence of the information received following the request at (b) above, that authority to decide on these be delegated to the Director of Finance and Resources in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee.

The meeting closed at 6.45 p.m.

Chairman