

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 20th September 2006, at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. N. E. Trigg (Chairman), Mrs J. D. Luck, C. R. Scurrall, S. P. Shannon, Mrs. C. J. Spencer and Mr S. Allard.

10/06 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor E. C. Tibby and Mr M. P. O'Mahoney and B. J. Somner.

11/06 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors Mrs J. D. Luck, C. R. Scurrall, S. P. Shannon, Mrs. C. J. Spencer declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 "Complaint to the Standards Board" as they all knew the Councillor who was the subject of the complaint.

12/05 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17th August 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the Minutes be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

13/05 **LOCAL INVESTIGATION OF A COMPLAINT TO THE STANDARDS BOARD**

The Committee considered a complaint (Ref SBE14433.06) referred to this Council by the Standards Board for England The complaint was by Councillor Mrs J.M.L.A. Griffiths who alleged that Councillor W. R. Newnes had breached the Council's Code of Conduct for Members. The allegation related to an incident in December 2005 when it was suggested that Councillor Newnes' conduct towards a member of staff of the Artrix Arts Centre failed to show respect to that person and brought his office as a Councillor and/or the Council in to disrepute. A grievance brought by the member of staff relating to the incident had been upheld by the Personnel Sub committee of the Artrix.

The Committee conducted a hearing into the complaint in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Standards Board For England. Councillor Newnes represented himself.

The Council's Code of Conduct requires Members to treat others with respect and that Members must not conduct themselves in a manner which would bring their office or the Council into disrepute. On considering the facts of the incident, the Committee found that Councillor Newnes' behaviour constituted a breach of the second of these requirements.

The Committee considered representations as to the nature of any penalty to be imposed.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) It is the Committee's finding that Councillor W. R. Newnes has breached the Council's Code of Conduct For Members by conducting himself in a manner which brought his office as a Councillor and the Council into disrepute; and
- (2) Because the Committee had no opportunity to investigate in detail the circumstances leading to the report and to the conclusions made by Redwing Solutions no further action be taken.
- (3) Lessons should be learnt from this allegation and that all bodies affiliated to the District Council should consider whether they have suitable and appropriate procedures in place to adequately protect employees and other members of all such bodies.

The Meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.

Chairman