

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER, 2009 AT 4.00PM**  
**IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK**  
**PART 1**

PRESENT: Councillors

Betteridge, Mr. R. (Chairman)	Independent Member
Bennett, Mrs. D.J.	Holder, M.J.
Burnett, J.	
Fisher, P.	Brereton & Ravenhill Parish Council
Williams, Mrs. P.	Rugeley Town Council
Chapman, Mrs. J.	Independent Member
Elliott, Mr. M.	Independent Member
Sindrey, G.	Independent Member

(Apologies for absence were received from: Mr. M. King, Vice Chairman and Independent Member; Councillors Mrs. P.A. Ansell; Mrs. P.Z. Stretton; and A. Williams; Councillor Mrs. M. Allen (Cannock Wood Parish Council); Councillor D. Clarke (Norton Canes Parish Council); and Councillor R. Todd (Heath Hayes and Wimblebury Parish Council).

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman welcomed Mr. S. Partridge, Democratic Services Manager, and asked that the Committee's thanks and best wishes for the future be noted and forwarded to Matthew Challoner.

**5. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members**

No declarations of interests were submitted.

**6. Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 July, 2009 be approved as a correct record.

**7. Public Notice: Regulation 17 – Standards Committee (England) Regulations, 2008**

Consideration was given to the briefing note of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Enclosure 4.1 – 4.4 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

It was agreed that the following amendment be made to Recommendation option 2.1, and that this be the preferred option:

“2.1 All official paperwork, guidance notes etc in respect of a complaint against a Member shall make it plain that the name of the complainant may be included in any public notice subsequently issued in pursuance of Regulation 17 Standards Committee (England) Regulations, 2008, where a Councillor has been found not to be in breach of the Code of Conduct.”

RESOLVED:

That:

All official paperwork, guidance notes etc in respect of a complaint against a Member shall make it plain that the name of the complainant may be included in any public notice subsequently issued in pursuance of Regulation 17 Standards Committee (England) Regulations, 2008, where a Councillor has been found not to be in breach of the Code of Conduct.

**8. Review of Complaints Received (2008-09)**

Consideration was given to the Briefing Note of the Monitoring Officer (Enclosure 5.1 – 5.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The overview provided in relation to the nature and scope of the complaints received and / or dealt with by the Standards Committee or its subsidiary Panels during the 2008-09 Municipal Year be noted.
- (B) No further action was required at that time, as no particular pattern of behaviour was apparent from the review.
- (C) Further reviews of complaints received should be provided to the Committee on an annual basis.

**9. Training Needs in Respect of the Code of Conduct and Standards Matters**

The Democratic Services Manager advised that only limited feedback had been received from the Town and Parish Councils in respect of Members' training needs relating to the Code of Conduct and Standards matters.

The Town Clerk of Hednesford Town Council had advised that Members might be interested in participating in training, and Councillor Mrs. M. Allen, Cannock Wood Parish Council, had also

indicated that she might also be interested, depending on what was involved.

The Chairman advised that he would be attending the Annual Assembly of Standards for England during the week commencing 12 October, 2009, and it was hoped that this might highlight areas where particular training might be required.

The Chairman also recommended that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services should make enquiries of neighbouring authorities, such as Lichfield District Council and Stafford Borough Council, to establish what training was routinely provided for Members.

RESOLVED:

To carry the matter forward to the next meeting of the Standards Committee.

#### **10. Monitoring Officer – Interim Arrangements**

The Chairman moved a vote of thanks to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services who was leaving to take up an appointment with Wirral Council.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services advised that his employment with Cannock Chase Council would terminate on 15 November, 2009, though, because he had leave to take, he would actually finish on 23 October.

He further advised that the Chief Executive was in ongoing discussions with Alistair Welch, Head of Law and Administration at Stafford Borough Council, with a view to his taking over Monitoring Officer responsibilities on an interim basis, while examining if there existed a business case for shared services covering Legal and Democratic Services.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services assured Members that he would speak with the interim Monitoring Officer to bring him up to speed on the outstanding work programme for the Standards Committee.

The Chairman recommended that the interim arrangements should be confirmed to all Standards Committee Members as soon as possible, once agreed.

The Chairman advised that the next meeting of the Standards Committee was scheduled for 11 November, 2009. He considered it essential that the interim Monitoring Officer should attend the meeting. (Subsequently, the Chairman agreed to move the meeting to 23 November, in order to accommodate the interim Monitoring Officer's attendance.)

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CHAIRMAN