

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 13th September, 2005, at 6.00pm  
in Committee Room 4 at the Council House, Dudley

### PRESENT:-

The Bishop of Dudley (Independent Chairman)  
Councillors Hart, Ms Partridge and J Woodall; Mrs Jabeen.

### OFFICERS

The Director of Law and Property, (as Monitoring Officer) and Mr J Jablonski (Directorate of Law and Property).

## 1 MINUTES

### RESOLVED

1. That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4th April 2005, be approved as a correct record and signed.
2. That, subject to the following amendment, the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7th April 2005, be approved as a correct record and signed:-

That the third paragraph on page S/17 be placed after the first paragraph on that page and not as currently located.

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## 2 MATTER ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 7TH APRIL 2005

Arising from the decision of the Committee in the matter considered at this meeting, the Director of Law and Property reported that the Member concerned had sought leave to appeal but that, following an application for leave to appeal to the President of the Adjudication Panel, it had been decided that leave not be granted.

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## 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No member made a declaration of interest in accordance with Members' Code of Conduct.

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## 4 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Fraser-Macnamara, Male and Tyler.

## GUIDANCE TO MEMBERS IN RELATION TO THEIR USE OF THE MARKED COPY OF THE ELECTORAL REGISTER

A report of the Director of Law and Property (Monitoring Officer) was submitted in respect of the guidance to be issued to Members of the Council in relation to use of the marked copy of the Electoral Register, following the meeting of this Committee held on 7th April 2005.

Following receipt of an opinion from a Barrister, an expert in relation to Electoral Law, suggested wording for use as general guidance was set out in paragraph 7 of the report submitted.

During consideration of this matter, consideration was also given to a recent complaint under the Confidential Reporting Policy that had been received and proposed action in relation to that complaint.

### RESOLVED

1. That the following guidance be issued to Members in respect of their use of the marked copy of the Electoral Register, as follows:-

"Members should take care to ensure that when making use of or making reference to any marked copies of the Electoral Register they do not engage in any conduct that could suggest misuse of such information in breach of paragraph 4 of the Members Code of Conduct. This could occur, for example, by linking, unwittingly or otherwise, a decision to take action on a person's behalf to that person's voting record".

2. That receipt of the complaint referred to at the meeting be noted, together with the proposed action to be taken thereon, and that the Monitoring Officer be requested to submit a report on this matter to a future meeting of the Committee.

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## REQUEST FOR DISPENSATION

A report of the Monitoring Officer was submitted on a request from elected members for a dispensation which would allow Members who were governors of primary schools and likely to have a prejudicial interest to speak at meetings of the Council, its Committees and the Cabinet, and to vote, in relation to the proposals recently announced arising from the Primary School Review.

During consideration of this matter, the Committee determined that it was proper to make the dispensation requested in respect of all members who were governors of primary schools within the borough.

RESOLVED

- (1) That approval be given to the grant of a dispensation to all members who are governors of primary schools within the borough, in view of the announcement of recent proposals arising from the Primary School Review, so as to enable such members to contribute to the discussion on these proposals at meetings of the Council, its Committees and the Cabinet, and to vote, and that the dispensation be for a period of six months from the date of this meeting, during which time it was likely that the period of consultation would have elapsed and a decision made regarding the proposals.
- (2) That the basis for granting this dispensation is that the transaction of business of the Council would otherwise be impeded because more than 50% of members at a meeting may be affected and the political balance of the meeting may be prejudiced.

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TERM OF APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

The Monitoring Officer referred to the need, shortly, to advertise for Independent Members of the Committee as the current term of office of the Bishop and Dudley and Mrs Jabeen was nearing completion.

In this regard, it was noted that Mrs Jabeen did not wish to be considered for a further term of office and, in the event that there were no further meetings of the Committee prior to the end of her term of office, the opportunity was taken to thank her for her work on the Committee and offer best wishes to her for the future. Mrs Jabeen responded by indicating, in particular, how worthwhile she had found her experience as a Member of the Committee and expressed her best wishes to all concerned.

The meeting ended at 7.05pm.

CHAIRMAN