



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

ON

TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2014

AT

7.00 PM

AGENDA

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UNCLASSIFIED

**Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire**

**Andy Couldrick
Chief Executive**



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Our Vision

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

Our Priorities

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

The Underpinning Principles

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

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WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

To: The Chairman and Members of the Standards Committee

A Meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** will be held at the Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham on **Tuesday 14 October 2014 at 7.00 pm**

Andy Couldrick
Chief Executive
Monday, 06 October 2014

WBC Members

Chris Bowring
Pauline Helliar-Symons (Vice Chairman)
Beth Rowland
Ken Miall
Malcolm Richards
Rob Stanton (Chairman)

Parish / Town Council representatives

Roger Loader
Roy Mantel
Ray Duncan

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
10.00	None Specific	MINUTES To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 1 July 2014.	1
11.00	None Specific	APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence	
12.00		DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest	
13.00		PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	

To answer any public questions
The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this Committee.

Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact Democratic Services on the numbers listed below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions

Explanatory leaflets are also available in the Civic Offices and Libraries.

14.00		MEMBER QUESTION TIME To answer any member questions	
15.00		PARISH /TOWN COUNCIL QUESTION TIME To answer any questions from Parish/Town Councillors	
16.00	None Specific	UPDATE TO THE MEMBER OFFICER PROTOCOL To consider and endorse a revised Member/Officer Protocol.	4
17.00	None Specific	UPDATE ON COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK To consider a report setting out a summary of complaints received since July 2014.	31
18.00		ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading	

This is an agenda for a Meeting of the Standards Committee

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE
HELD ON FROM TUESDAY 1 JULY 2014 FROM 7.00 PM TO 7.45 PM**

Present:-

Wokingham Borough Members:- *Rob Stanton (Chairman),
Pauline Helliar-Symons (Vice Chairman), Chris Bowring, Ken Miall and Malcolm Richards)*

Also present:-

*Kevin Jacob, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Moulton, Monitoring Officer and Head of Governance and Improvements Services
Mary Severin, Deputy Monitoring Officer and Borough Solicitor*

PART I

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 March 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

It was noted that it was intended to bring a revised version of the Member Officer Protocol to the next meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Beth Rowland.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

5. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

6. PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL QUESTION TIME

There were no Parish/Town Councillor questions.

7. UPDATE ON COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

The Committee considered a report on Agenda pages 4 to 6 which set out a summary of Code of Conduct complaints received and actions taken between January and June 2014.

Andrew Moulton, Monitoring Officer and Head of Governance and Democratic Services commented that of the three complaints listed, two had been new complaints where a decision had been taken not to take any further action following the consideration of the complaints by him or the Deputy Monitoring Office in consultation with one of the Council's appointed Independent Persons and the Chairman of the Standards Committee. The third update related to an ongoing complaint which had been referred for investigation. Following the conclusion of that investigation, an apology had been issued by the Member subject of the complaint and the complaint had been closed.

Two of the complaints had related to concerns about the proper declaration of Member interests within Members Interest Forms. New guidance to Members had been issued by the Deputy Monitoring Officer to assist Members in completing their forms.

In addition, new Members of the Council had been given training on declarations of interest as well as the Members Code of Conduct generally as part of their induction training undertaken on 10 June 2014.

Members of the Committee were asked if they felt it would be useful for refresher training on declarations of interests be offered to all Members. Members did think that this would be useful and that some confusion amongst Members between Members Interest Forms and Related Third Party Transactions Form which Members also had to complete.

Members also felt it would be very helpful if Members were given a number of simple practical scenarios where there might or might not be a requirement to declare or register interests. This could be in the form of an informal quiz. It was suggested by Ken Miall that the feedback from this could then be used to inform future training.

In response to a question, Andrew Moulton commented that there was not as yet any evidence of repeat complainants although this was something that was monitored.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be updated;
- 2) That practical scenarios around when it was necessary to declare or register interests be developed and sent to Members;
- 3) That Code of Conduct refresher training should be arranged and offered to all Members.

8. STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2014

The Committee considered the draft Standards Committee Annual Report 2014 which had been circulated to the Committee separately from the Agenda. In addition, a draft introduction to the report from the Chairman was circulated at the meeting.

Although technically an annual report, it was explained that the report was the first to be produced since the introduction of the revised Standards regime in 2012. A report had not been produced in 2013 as it had not been felt there had been sufficient information to report upon.

In discussion, a number of typographical errors were corrected and the penultimate paragraph relating to the monitoring of complaints considered by the Monitoring Officer deleted as it duplicated other references within the report to complaints monitoring. Comment was also made that it would be useful to have more information about what the public felt of Members conduct.

RESOLVED: That the Standards Committee Annual Report 2014 be approved for submission to the Council.

These are the Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee

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