



Epping Forest District Council

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 28th June, 2005

Place: Civic Offices, High Street, Epping
Room: Committee Room 1
Time: 7.30 pm
Committee Secretary: G Lunnun (Direct Line: 01992 564244)
Email: glunnun@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Dr D Hawes (Chairman), Mrs D Borton, Ms M Marshall, J Salter, Mrs P Smith and G Weltch

Parish/Town Council Deputy Representative:

K Percy

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES (Pages 5 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2005 (attached).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To declare interests in any item on the agenda.

4. STANDARDS COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT 2004/05 (Pages 11 - 24)

Recommendation:

To consider the attached draft annual report for submission to the District Council.

(Monitoring Officer) A draft of the annual report for 2004/05 is attached.

5. PROTOCOL FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ENGAGED IN THE DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS (Pages 25 - 42)

Recommendations:

- (1) To consider the revised draft Planning Protocol;
- (2) To issue the draft for consultation to the District Council, parish and town councils, planning agents and planning officers;
- (3) To authorise the Chairman to determine whether to submit the revised Protocol to the July District Council meeting in the light of comments received; and
- (4) To authorise the Chairman to determine whether the training course on the Planning Protocol should be deferred, when the position is clearer.

(Monitoring Officer) A revised draft of the Protocol is attached. The Protocol has been amended where shown to reflect recent Standards Board for England advice about lobby groups and "dual hatted" councillors.

No consultation has been carried out on these changes either with Planning Services, councillors, local councils or planning agents. The next available Council meeting at which the Protocol could be adopted is on 27 July 2005. If there were no adverse comment from consultees, it would be possible for a report from this Committee to go to that meeting. If representations of a significant nature were received, it might be necessary to defer submission of the Protocol until the Council meeting on 27 September 2005.

The September date is after the scheduled date for the Planning Protocol training course. It is recommended that the training course remains as advertised. It would still be possible to run the course and highlight those changes due for adoption. However, a discretion for the Chairman to determine otherwise might be advisable.

6. ADVICE TO MEMBERS SERVING ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS (Pages 43 - 48)

Recommendations:

- (1) To consider the draft revision to the Advice Note; and
- (2) To issue the advice as agreed to District Councillors and Town and Parish Councils.

(Monitoring Officer) The Standards Board for England advice referred to in the preceding item also affects the previous advice issued by the Committee on declaration of interests by councillors in relation to their links with outside organisations of which they are also members.

The attached draft reflects the changes which flow from the Standards Board advice on "dual hatted" members and lobby groups.

If the Committee agrees these revisions, the advice will be issued direct to district councillors and town and parish councils.

7. POLICY ON USE OF COUNCIL FACILITIES BY MEMBERS

(Monitoring Officer) Officers are still working on a draft policy on the use of Council facilities by members including the use of IT. The document will be submitted to the next meeting.

8. REGISTRATION BY MEMBERS OF FINANCIAL AND OTHER INTERESTS

(Monitoring Officer) Following publication of members' interests on the Council's website, a member has suggested that there appears to be an inconsistent approach. The member will be attending the meeting to seek the views of the Committee.

9. ALLEGATIONS RECEIVED (Pages 49 - 50)

(Monitoring Officer) To note the current position on allegations about District and Parish/Town Councillors as set out on the attached schedule.

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

(Monitoring Officer) The calendar for 2005/06 provides for meetings of the Committee on 26 July 2005, 18 October 2005, 21 February 2006 and 11 April 2006.

Additional meetings can be arranged as and when required by the Committee.

11. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

To consider whether, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press should be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on grounds that they will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated:

Agenda Item No	Subject	Exempt Information Paragraph Number
12	Allegations Received – Appointment of Sub- Committee	16

To resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items which are confidential under Section 100(A)(2) of the Local Government Act 1972:

Agenda Item No	Subject
Nil	Nil

12. **ALLEGATIONS RECEIVED - APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEE (Pages 51 - 52)**