

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Wantsum Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 22 December 2008.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr N J D Chard, Ms A Harrison, Mr C Hart, Mr D A Hirst, Mr K G Lynes (Vice-Chairman), Mr R J Parry (Substitute for Mr A J King, MBE) and Mr G Rowe.

ALSO PRESENT: .

IN ATTENDANCE: Geoff Wild (Director of Law and Governance), Ms A Beer (Director Of Personnel & Development), Mr G Mills (Democratic Services Manager (Executive)) and Mr P Sass (Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

25. Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) *(Item 3)*

(1) On 1 October 2008 the Department for Communities and Local Government issued a consultation paper on proposed revisions to the Code of Conduct for Members, together with a new proposed model Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees. This report invited the Committee to consider a proposed formal response to the proposals in Chapter 3 of the Consultation Paper which relates specifically to the proposed Model Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees. Specifically the Consultation Paper sought views on whether a mandatory code was needed; which groups of employees such a code should apply to and whether there should be a publicly available register of interest for certain groups of employees.

(2) Mrs Beer said that the report was being submitted to the Personnel Committee at the specific request of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee so that Members had the opportunity to respond to the officer section of the Consultation. Mrs Beer said that the Kent Code relating to KCC officers Code of Conduct had been revised over the past 12 months and had been considered by the Personnel Committee and was embodied as part of the Constitution so she did not see the need for there to be a statutory code. Ms Harrison said that she believed that Members and officers should be treated the same and therefore subject to the same rules. She also said that she believed that representatives from outside bodies and also co-opted Members should be subject to CRB checks. She also said that she noted the closing date for responses to the DCLG was 24 December 2008 and she said that in future elected Members should be given more opportunity to make their views known on consultations of this nature. In response, Mr Sass said that he would check whether under the terms of their appointment, co-opted Members were automatically given a CRB check and advised Members accordingly. Mrs Beer said that as part of their induction, new members of staff would automatically have the terms of the Code pointed out to them. She also confirmed that the KCC Code embraced all the elements of the statutory Code. She also confirmed that staff association and unions have been consulted and that

the normal procedure would be to clear the consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member.

(3) RESOLVED the Personnel Committee endorsed the proposed Form of Response to Chapter 3 of the Department for Communities and Local Government's Consultation Paper on a Proposed Model Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees as detailed in Appendix 3 of the Committee report.