

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Standards Committee held in the Bewl Room, Sessions House, County Hall Maidstone on Thursday, 14 July 2011.

PRESENT: Miss R MacCrone (Chairman), Mr D S Daley, Mrs N Ahmed and Mr P Gammon, MBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Sass (Head of Democratic Services)

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

##### **15. Substitutes/apologies**

*(Item 1)*

Mr Sass reported apologies from Mr Christie, Mr Ferrin and Mr Wild.

##### **16. Declarations of Interest**

*(Item 2)*

There were no declarations of interest by Committee Members.

##### **17. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2011**

*(Item 3)*

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2011 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

##### **18. The Standards Committee's Annual Report to the County Council**

*(Item 4)*

Resolved: that the draft annual report on the Committee's activities in the previous year be approved for submission to the County Council.

##### **19. The Localism Bill - proposed changes to the Standards regime**

*(Item 5)*

(1) The Committee considered the content and format of the proposed consultation document in relation to the future of the ethical standards regime and also considered the proposed method of consultation and the list of proposed consultees.

(2) After a detailed discussion, the Committee was of the view that the consultation document should be much clearer and firmer about the preferred way forward in relation to the future of the ethical standards regime. Specifically, it was suggested that the consultation document should contain the following:

- (a) That KCC should retain a Code of Conduct for Members once the statutory requirement to have a Code disappears

- (b) That there should be a regime for investigating complaints from the public and others that a Member has breached the Code of Conduct and the regime must include some sort of independent challenge, i.e. KCC can't be seen to be regulating its own Member conduct without independent oversight

(3) Mr Gammon also suggested that criteria should be developed to evaluate responses to the consultation exercise, e.g. cost, added value and public perception although he accepted there might be others.

Resolved: that the Head of Democratic Services be requested to re-draft the consultation document accordingly and re-submit to the next meeting for approval.

## **20. Standards Committee Work Programme and future meeting dates**

*(Item 6)*

The Committee agreed to note its work programme and future meeting dates, but agreed to have a further meeting on Wednesday 5 October 2011.

## **21. Any other urgent business**

*(Item 7)*

There were no items of urgent business.

## **22. Date of Next Meeting**

*(Item 8)*

The Committee agreed to meet on Wednesday 5 October 2011, starting at 10.00am.