

BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS

Minutes of the meeting of the **JOINT STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held in the Lecture Room, Council Offices, Needham Market on 15 February 2013 at 2.00pm.

PRESENT: **Councillors:** **Co-opted Members:**

Mr G M Brewster	Mr C A Reeve
Mrs E B Gibson-Harries	Mr J G Watson
Mr A F D W Osborne	Mrs N Willshire
Mr D J Osborne	

In attendance: Kathryn Saward - Monitoring Officer
Steve Ellwood - Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Amanda Hobday - Monitoring Officer Assistant

JST1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A C Bavington and Miss P Cook.

JST2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr A F D W Osborne stated that he had been granted a dispensation for Babergh District Council's Development Committee meeting held on 23 January 2013, as detailed at Appendix 1 to report JST/3/13 and listed at Appendix 1 to report JST/5/13.

JST3 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Joint Standards Committee meeting held on [14 November 2012](#) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

JST4 PETITIONS

None received.

JST5 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

JST6 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

JST7 REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Monitoring Officer presented a report ([Paper JST/1/13](#)) informing the Committee on how the new process for the consideration of complaints under the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct is working and also inviting the Committee to consider the inclusion of additional assessment criteria, which had been identified whilst undertaking the initial assessment of complaints.

RESOLVED

That the assessment criteria be amended as shown at Appendix 1 to report JST/1/13, subject to a minor amendment being made to paragraph (4) to replace the word “seriousness” with “serious”.

JST8 CREATION OF A SUFFOLK JOINT STANDARDS BOARD

The Monitoring Officer presented a report ([Paper JST/2/13](#)) updating the Committee on proposals for the creation of a ‘Suffolk Joint Standards Board’ between Babergh, Mid Suffolk and Suffolk County Council, to determine final stage complaints under the Suffolk Local Code of Conduct.

The Committee discussed the need for political balance on the Suffolk Joint Standards Board and it was agreed that the political balance rule should be waived.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the proposals documented in report JST/2/13 be noted.**
- (2) That the Articles and Terms of Reference at Appendix 1 to Paper JST/2/13 be commended to Full Council subject to the following amendments:-**
 - a) that political balance rules do not apply to the Suffolk Joint Standards Board**
 - b) that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make minor amendments to the Articles and Terms of Reference as required in consultation with the Monitoring Officer of Suffolk County Council.**

JST9 REPORT ON DISPENSATIONS GRANTED

The Monitoring Officer presented a report ([Paper JST/3/13](#)) appraising the Committee of applications for dispensations received and determined since the date of the last meeting of the Joint Standards Committee.

RESOLVED

That the content of report JST/3/13 be noted.

JST10 REPORT ON COMPLAINTS

The Monitoring Officer presented a report ([Paper JST/4/13](#)) on the complaints received and determined since the date of the last meeting of the Joint Standards Committee.

A verbal update to the report was given, advising that 2 additional complaints had been received and that these had been mediated.

RESOLVED

That the content of report JST/4/13 and the verbal update be noted.

JST11 REPORT ON DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS/GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

The Monitoring Officer presented a report ([Paper JST/5/13](#)) containing details of interests and gifts/items of hospitality declared by Members during the period 1 November 2012 to 31 January 2013.

RESOLVED

That the content of report JST/5/13 be noted.

JST12 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE JOINT STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Monitoring Officer presented a report ([Paper JST/6/13](#)) for submission to Full Council summarising the work carried out by the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Standards Committee for 2012/13.

RESOLVED

That the content of report JST/6/13 be noted.

JST13 UPDATE ON GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Monitoring Officer gave a verbal update on the Governance Review being undertaken by Anne Brown, the Interim Governance Executive. The Constitutional Review Working Group has made a preliminary recommendation and there is a possibility that the role currently undertaken by the Joint Standards Committee will become part of the remit of a different committee. The outcome is awaited.

RESOLVED

That the position be noted.

JST14 COMPLIANCE WITH PART 7 OF THE LOCALISM ACT 2011

The Monitoring Officer gave a verbal report advising the Committee that all Babergh and Mid Suffolk district councillors have completed Register of Interests forms with the exception of two Babergh members, one of whom has not done so due to illness. All district council registers are now published on each Council's website. All parish/town council registers received within the Babergh district are also published on its website. Due to issues with the structure of the Mid Suffolk website, it has not yet been possible to publish its parish/town council registers although work is ongoing to resolve this as a priority. It is estimated that approximately 60% of the Registers expected from parish councils have been received.

RESOLVED

That the position be noted.

JST15 TRAINING ON THE SUFFOLK CODE OF CONDUCT

The Monitoring Officer gave a verbal report advising that training for parish councils on the Suffolk Code of Conduct is being organised by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils.

RESOLVED

That the position be noted.

JST16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A provisional date for the next meeting of the Joint Standards Committee, pending the outcome of the Governance Review, was arranged for Friday, 21 June 2013 at 2pm at the Babergh District Council offices.

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee thanked the Monitoring Officer and the Monitoring Officer Assistant for their work carried out in supporting the Joint Standards Committee.

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Chairman