

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the STANDARDS COMMITTEE held in Meeting Room 1, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 25 August 2005.

PRESENT: Councillor D H Bristow – Chairman.
Councillor T D Sanderson and Messrs D L Hall and D MacPherson.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs B E Boddington.

10. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL ISSUES

The Chairman confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

No declarations of interest were received.

11. LOCAL AUTHORITIES (CODE OF CONDUCT) (LOCAL DETERMINATION) REGULATIONS 2003

The Committee noted the procedure for the hearing of cases under the Local Authorities (Code of Conduct) (Local Determination) Regulations 2003.

12. OLDHURST PARISH COUNCIL - ALLEGED BREACH OF CODE OF CONDUCT

(a) Parish Councillor G J Bull

(In attendance were Parish Councillor G J Bull and Mrs Bull, Mr R C Lapwood, Clerk to Oldhurst Parish Council and Ms C Deller, Investigating Officer.)

The Chairman introduced Members of the Committee and stated the purpose of the proceedings to be heard. No representations were received from Councillor Bull to exclude the public from the meeting. He then invited the Investigating Officer to present her report. In presenting her report, the Investigating Officer called Mr R C Lapwood as a witness in connection with the references in her report relating to the issue of a copy of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct to Councillor Bull and whether training in the Code had been offered to him. Councillor Bull then asked Mr Lapwood if he recalled a telephone conversation in February, 2005 when he had requested a copy of the Code.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Bull addressed the Committee.

Following questioning by Members of the Committee, and in determining that they had sufficient information on which to make a finding, the Committee left the room.

At the conclusion of their deliberations the Chairman announced that the Committee was satisfied that Parish Councillor G J Bull had failed to disclose a personal interest and to withdraw from a meeting of Oldhurst Parish Council when a matter in which he had a prejudicial interest was discussed contrary to Paragraphs 9 and 10 (a) of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct.

The Chairman then sought the views of the Investigating Officer and Councillor Bull as to whether any action should be taken and, if so, what form it should take.

The Committee then left the room.

On their return the Chairman announced the decision of the Committee details of which are attached at Appendix A hereto.

(b) **Parish Councillor Mrs C Bussetil**

(In attendance were Parish Councillor Mrs C Bussetil and Mr S Bussetil, Mr R C Lapwood, Clerk to Oldhurst Parish Council and Ms C Deller, Investigating Officer.)

The Chairman introduced Members of the Committee and stated the purpose of the proceedings to be heard. No representations were received from Councillor Mrs Bussetil or Mr Bussetil to exclude the public from the meeting. He then invited the Investigating Officer to present her report. In presenting her report the Investigating Officer called Mr R C Lapwood as a witness in connection with the references in her report relating to signing/availability of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct, training in the provisions of the Code, whether she had declared a personal interest at the meeting of the Parish Council held on 6th January 2005 and on arrangements for the distribution of information on the Code to Parish Councillors.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Bussetil and Mr Bussetil addressed the Committee.

Following questions by Members of the Committee and in determining that they had sufficient information in which to reach a finding, the Committee left the room.

At the conclusion of their deliberations the Chairman announced that the Committee were satisfied that Parish Councillor Mrs C Bussetil had failed to disclose a personal interest and to withdraw from a meeting of Oldhurst Parish Council when a matter in which she had a prejudicial interest was discussed contrary to Paragraph 9 and 10 (a) of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct.

The Chairman then sought the views of the Investigating Officer and Councillor Mrs Bussetil as to whether any action should be taken and, if so, what form it should take.

The Committee, then left the room.

On their return the Chairman announced the decision of the Committee details of which are attached at Appendix B hereto.

Councillor and Mr Bussetil left the room.

The Committee considered whether any further recommendations should be made arising from their preceding deliberations. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED

that Oldhurst Parish Council be invited to commend to all its Parish Councillors and its Clerk that they participate in training on the local government ethical framework, including the Code of Conduct.

Chairman