

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the REFERRALS (ASSESSMENT) SUB COMMITTEE held in Room D5, Pathfinder House, St. Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 1 December 2009.

PRESENT: Mr M Lynch – Chairman.
Councillor Mrs B E Boddington and
Mr G Watkins.

102. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 3rd September and adjourned to 6th October 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

103. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were made.

104. GUIDANCE TO ASSIST ASSESSMENT OF CASE

The Guidance produced by Standards for England and collated by the Monitoring Officer to assist the Sub-Committee in their assessment of the case submitted was received and noted.

105. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information under paragraph 7 (c) relating to the deliberations of the Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee established under provisions of Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000.

106. PRE-ASSESSMENT REPORT AND ENQUIRIES - CASE NO. 24

Members considered the following documents collated by the Monitoring Officer (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book) to assist the Sub-Committee in their deliberations in respect of a complaint received against a Councillor serving on St Neots Town Council:-

- (a) e-mail exchange between Councillor D A Giles and the Monitoring Officer dated 5th – 7th November 2009;
- (b) Minutes and Annex – St Neots Town Council Planning Committee dated 4th November 2009; and
- (c) Registration of Interests Form – Councillor Mrs J Bird.

A copy of a letter received from Councillor Mrs J Bird dated 25th November 2009 received after the despatch of the Agenda also was

circulated to Members together with a GIS map indicating the location of Councillor Mrs Bird's property and the proposed development site.

107. INITIAL ASSESSMENT - CASE NO 24

The Sub-Committee considered the allegation made in the case against Councillor Mrs J Bird of St Neots Town Council seeking the advice of the Monitoring Officer as necessary.

Having regard to the evidence submitted, the Sub-Committee were of the view that it would be helpful to Councillor Mrs Bird if she was to receive training from the Monitoring Officer particularly given its importance in terms of her role as Chairman of the Town Council's Planning Committee. It was also the Sub-Committee's expectation that the Town Clerk (or Clerk to the Committee) had a role in advising Councillors who had declared a prejudicial interest that they must withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting considering the business was being held. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the allegation made against Councillor Mrs J Bird that she had failed to comply with paragraphs 9, 10 (1), 10 (2) and 12 of St Neots Town Council's Code of Conduct be not referred for investigation and that no further action be taken in the case for the reasons set out in the "Decision Notice: No Further Action" appended to these Minutes.

Chairman