

## Standards Committee

Tuesday, 1st May, 2007

### PRESENT:

#### Independent Members

Mike Wilkinson (Chair) (Independent Member)  
C Grant (Independent Member)  
Rosemary Greaves (Reserve Independent Member)

#### Councillors

E Nash G Kirkland

#### Parish Members

Councillor Mrs P Walker Pool in Wharfedale Parish Council  
Councillor John C Priestley East Keswick Parish Council (Reserve Member)

### APOLOGIES:

J L Carter

#### **106 Appeals against refusal of inspection of documents**

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents in accordance with Procedure Rule 25 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

#### **107 Exclusion of public**

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

#### **108 Late items**

The Chair indicated that, in accordance with his powers under the Local Government Act 1972, he agreed to accept for inclusion on the agenda one late item (minute 110 refers). The report in question was not available at the time of the agenda dispatch and the required consideration for the following reason:-

The information in Appendix 3 to the report was not available when the agenda was finalised as the Standards Board for England and the Yorkshire Local Councils Association had circulated their recommended version of the Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils after the date of agenda

publication. The matter also required urgent consideration as the new Code of Conduct came into force on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2007.

#### **109 Declaration of interests**

There were no declarations of personal/prejudicial interest for the purpose of section 81(3) of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraphs 9 to 12 of the Members' Code of Conduct.

#### **110 New Model Code of Conduct**

The Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) presented a report asking Members of the Committee to consider the new Model Code of Conduct made on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2007 which will come into force on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2007. Members of the Committee were asked to recommend adoption of the Model Code to the Annual Meeting of Council on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2007. Members of the Committee were also asked to make recommendations to the Parish and Town Councils wholly or mainly in the Leeds area in relation to adoption by them of the Code of Conduct.

It was outlined that all the sections of the new Model Code were mandatory for district or unitary county councils. Members discussed the possibility of adding extra provisions to the model Code of Conduct and instructed officers to add a consultation with all Members to the work programme in six months time in order to ascertain whether any additions were required.

It was reported that not all provisions in the new Model Code were mandatory for Parish and Town Councils, and that the Standards Board for England and the Yorkshire Local Councils Association had circulated a recommended version of the Code to Parish and Town Clerks. However the Standards Board and the Yorkshire Local Councils Association appeared to have removed some paragraphs which were mandatory.

Members of the Standards Committee discussed the differences between the version of the Code for Parish and Town Council's drafted by the Council (Appendix 3) and the version recommended by the Standards Board and the Yorkshire Local Councils Association, and were satisfied that the Leeds City Council version was accurate. The Committee discussed that as the Standards Committee's recommended version of the Code would conflict with the version already circulated by the Standards Board and the Yorkshire Local Councils Association, the Clerks would require a covering letter to explain the differences between the Codes in order to avoid confusion.

Finally, the Chair of the Committee expressed his appreciation to the Leeds City Councillors for attending the meeting during the run up to the election.

**RESOLVED** – Members of the Committee resolved to:

- Note the contents of the report;

- Recommend to Council that the mandatory provisions of the new Model Code, as drafted and set out at Appendix 1 to the report, be adopted to form the new Member Code of Conduct for Leeds City Council;
- Request that an item be added to the Committee's work programme detailing recommendations in relation to a consultation process on local provisions to be included within the Code of Conduct;
- Recommend to Parish and Town Councils wholly or mainly in the Leeds area that the mandatory provisions of the Code, together with the non-mandatory provision, as drafted and set out at Appendix 3 to the report (late item) be adopted to form the new Code of Conduct for those authorities by no later than 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007; and
- Join with the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) in urging Leeds City Councillors to attend the training offered in relation to the new Code and to complete their register of interests within the 28 days permitted from adoption of the new Code.