

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ETHICAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21 APRIL 2010

Present:

Mrs F Anthony
Mr R Chapman (Ex Officio)
Mrs B Everitt (Chair)
Mr B Hannah
Mrs V Jenkins
Mr D Reeve
Mr R Middleton

In attendance

Mr C Harding	Chief Executive, Norfolk Police Authority
Miss N Wotton	Committee Administrator, Norfolk Police Authority

1. Election of Chair

Following consideration of guidance received from Standards for England in respect of the election of independent members to the role of Committee Chair, Mr Reeve nominated Mrs Everitt, duly seconded by Mrs Jenkins. There being no other nominations, it was

RESOLVED:

That Mrs Everitt be appointed as Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.

2. Election of Deputy Chair

Mrs Jenkins proposed that Mr Middleton be elected as Deputy Chair, seconded by Mr Reeve. There being no other nominations, it was

RESOLVED:

That Mr Middleton be appointed Deputy Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.

3. To note any apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Revell.

4. To note any declarations of interest

The Independent Members declared an interest in Item 12: The Annual Review of Members' Declarations of Interest.

5. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2009 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The Chief Executive apprised Members that the details on the Chief Officers' Salaries would be included on the Police Authority website in the near future. It was also noted that the Annual Statement of Accounts would be presented to the next full Authority meeting and would be circulated to the Ethical Standards Committee for information in due course.

Item 8 – Members were pleased to note that the Annual Review process for all Members had been approved and the process was underway.

Item 11 – The Ethical Standards Committee Annual Report for 2008/09 had been presented to the full Authority and had been well received. The Annual Report for 2009/10 was on the agenda and would be discussed later in the meeting.

Item 14 – The half day training session with Jonathan Goolden had taken place and had been extremely useful and informative.

6. **To note whether any items have been proposed as matters of Urgent Business**

There were none.

7. **The Annual Review of the Terms of Reference for the Ethical Standards Committee**

Members were reminded that in order to ensure continuous improvement, a review of the Constitution/Terms of Reference for all of the Authority's Committees and Panels was undertaken on an annual basis. Members were reminded that an in depth review had taken place in the last year and no significant changes were recommended at this time. It was noted that the number of Lay Independent Members should increase from 2 to 3.

RESOLVED:

To approve the Terms of Reference of the Committee, subject to the minor amendment as discussed at the meeting.

8. **The Annual Standards for England Conference on the 18 and 19 October 2010 at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham**

Members were apprised of the arrangements for the next Annual Standards for England Conference, which was taking place on the 18 and 19 October 2010 at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham.

After discussions, it was agreed that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee would attend the Conference. Anyone else wishing to attend was asked to contact the Chief Executive as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

That Mrs Everitt and Mr Middleton would attend the Standards for England Conference on the 18 and 19 October 2010. Anyone interested in attending was asked to inform the Chief Executive as soon as possible.

9. **Annual Report on the work of the Ethical Standards Committee for 2009/10**

Members discussed the draft Annual Report on the work of the Ethical Standards Committee during 2009/10. It was noted that the report would be presented by the Committee Chair, to the next full Authority meeting on the 22 June. The Chief Executive reminded the Lay Independent Members that they were welcome to attend any future Authority or Committee meetings, in order to broaden their knowledge of the work of the Authority.

There followed some discussion on the content of the report and the suggested amendments were noted. The Committee approved the report, subject to the amendments as discussed at the meeting. It was noted that the updated report would be circulated to the Committee Members for information and comment, prior to being presented to the full Authority meeting on the 22 June 2010.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) To approve the Annual Report on the work of the Ethical Standards Committee for 2009/10, subject to the amendments as discussed at the meeting;
- iii) That a copy of the updated Annual Report would be circulated to Members for information and comment, prior to being presented at the full Authority meeting on the 22 June 2010.

10. **Annual Review of the Assessment Criteria against which new complaints are assessed and the Investigations Process to be followed by the Monitoring Officer, when undertaking an investigation**

Members were apprised that it was good practice to regularly review the Assessment Criteria and Investigations Process, in case they were required in the future. After discussions, it was agreed that no amendments were needed on this occasion.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) To endorse the Assessment Criteria against which new complaints are assessed and the Investigations Process to be followed by the Monitoring Officer, when undertaking an investigation.

11. **Updated Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

Members were reminded that the Ethical Standards Committee were automatic Consultees with regard to any proposed changes to the Contract Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or general Standing Orders. It was acknowledged that the timing of the report was out of step with the planned Ethical Standards Committee meetings and it was agreed that future documents would be brought to the Committee for review before ratification by the full Authority.

In response to a query from a Member regarding local and regional collaboration, it was noted that the individual Chief Executives retained overall responsibility in their role as Monitoring Officer for their respective Members, Regulations and Standing Orders.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the contents of the report;
- ii) To endorse the updated Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and it was agreed that future documents would be brought to the Committee for review before ratification by the full Authority.

12. **Annual Review of Members' Declarations of Interest**

The Committee reviewed Members Declarations of Interest forms and noted that the forms were re-issued on a six monthly basis to ensure that they were kept up to date. It was reported that any Declaration of Interest Forms which were outstanding would be followed up by the Chief Executive's Office.

Following discussions, it was recommended that 'No' or 'None' should be used instead of 'Not Applicable'. The Committee also recommended that Members should list all associations, memberships and interests eg membership of the National Trust or the Institute of Advanced Drivers, to maintain honesty and transparency at all times.

RESOLVED:

To agree that when completing Business Interest Forms 'No' or 'None' should be used instead of N/A. Members were also recommended to list all associations, memberships and interests, eg the National Trust, Institute of Advanced Drivers etc in future.

13. **The Gifts and Hospitality Register**

The Committee reviewed the Gifts and Hospitality Register forms. It was reported that all gifts or hospitality in excess of £25 must be declared in the register and Members were pleased to note that Members were declaring any items received.

After discussions, the Committee recommended that the Gifts and Hospitality Register be amended to include a return from each individual Member for that financial year, rather than only listing any returns received.

RESOLVED:

To agree that the Gifts and Hospitality Register be amended to include a return from each individual Member for that financial year, rather than only listing any returns received.

14. **The Declaration of Related Party Transactions**

Members reviewed the Declaration of Related Party Transactions and it was noted that the information was available to view upon request in the Chief Executive's office. The Committee commended Members' openness and transparency with regard to their declarations.

RESOLVED:

To note the Declaration of Related Party Transactions register.

15. **Action taken by the Chief Executive under Delegated Powers:**

There were none.

16. **Any other Items of Business**

The Chief Executive circulated copies of the Standards for England Annual Return for 2010, which he and the Committee Chair had recently completed, for information.

The Chief Executive circulated a draft copy of the Pay and Benefits Summary for Norfolk Police Authority and Norfolk Constabulary, for information.

The Committee then agreed to pass a resolution to exclude the Press and Public at this point:

17. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest not to disclose the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

18. **Confidential Update**

The Chief Executive provided the Committee with a confidential update on a potential complaint concerning a Member of the Authority.

19. **Date of next meeting**

Tuesday, 21 September 2010 at 10.00 am in the NPA Meeting Room.

(The meeting closed at 11.50 am).

CHAIRMAN