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STANDARDS COMMITTEE

At a meeting of the Standards Committee Wednesday, 22 February 2012 Committee Room 1, Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Mr A. Luxton (Vice Chairman) Mr R. Garner, Mrs A. Morris, and
Councillors: Browne, Parker, Redhead and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Mr B. Badrock, Councillor Swain and Parish Councillors
Mr B. Allen, Canon D. Felix

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney and A. Scott

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE COMMITTEE

STC11 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2011, having been printed and circulated, were signed as a correct record.

STC12 LOCALISM ACT 2011- IMPLICATIONS FOR STANDARDS

The Monitoring Officer gave a presentation on the future of Standards under the Localism Act 2011.

The Localism Act 2011 included new provisions on Standards and the issue of pre-determination by Elected Members. Each authority had a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its Members and co-opted Members of the Authority, which included Parish Councils. It was noted that each Authority must adopt a Code dealing with the conduct expected of its Members and co-opted Members when they were acting in that capacity.

The Code must embrace a set of seven principles, referred to as:

Action

- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Selflessness
- Leadership

and must provide for the registration and disclosure of both pecuniary and non pecuniary interests as well as a new category of disclosable pecuniary interests. Further Regulations and Guidance were awaited before the implementation date of 1 July 2012.

Members were advised that, although no longer a statutory function, Halton Borough Council was likely to delegate Standards functions to a Standards Committee, which would be a Committee of the local authority and the recommendation was likely to be that it be made up of nine Elected Members and up to 4 non voting co-optees – two Independent and two Parish Council Members.

The Act also required advertisement for and appointment of a new category of Independent Person to be involved in the consideration of complaints.

Members had the opportunity to discuss the proposals and to ask questions.

RESOLVED: That the verbal presentation be noted.

STC13 VOTE OF THANKS

The Vice Chairman noted that there were no further meetings scheduled for the Committee and wished to place on record his thanks to all Members for their past contribution and work of the Committee.

It was agreed that a letter of thanks be sent on the Chairman's behalf to all Members involved.

Monitoring Officer

Meeting ended at 4.20 p.m.