

## MEETING OF THE ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Held on Monday 10 August 2009

Strategic Command Centre, Headquarters, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, Dee Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 4FS



**Those present:** Councillor Andrew Bradley (Member, Fire Authority)  
Councillor Adrian Edwards (Member, Fire Authority)  
Mr John Giles (Independent Member, Fire Authority)  
Mr Albert Gregory (Independent Member, Fire Authority) (*Chairman*)  
Professor Christopher Guy (Independent Member, Fire Authority)  
Councillor Chris Harris (Member, Fire Authority)  
Councillor Peter Jones (Member, Fire Authority)  
Mr John Quinton (Independent Member, Fire Authority)  
Mr Ronald Webb (Independent Member, Fire Authority)

**In Attendance:** Lynda Kenyon (Committee Manager)  
Caroline Redzikowska (Clerk and Monitoring Officer)

Action

### 5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Jonathan Taylor (Independent Member).

### 6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

### 7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 JUNE 2009

#### Resolved:

- a) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2009 be Approved for signing by the Chairman.

### 8. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 JUNE 2009

#### Resolved:

- a) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2009 be Approved for signing by the Chairman **subject to the following inclusion** in the Minutes, which had inadvertently been omitted from the presented Minutes in the Agenda:

- Item 4 - "Resolved that the Standards Committee's Sub Committees, being the Assessment Sub Committee, the Review Panel and the Standards Hearing Panel, be appointed for the ensuing year."

### 9. UPDATE REPORT FROM THE CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER

The Clerk and Monitoring Officer provided an update on Member activity and issues arising, the salient updates and discussion points being:

- a) **Registers of Interest** - the Clerk and Monitoring Officer confirmed that, since the date of the report, she was pleased to advise that all Members' Registers of Interests had now been completed and returned. She stated that she needed to seek a minor clarification on two of the Registers, and that two other Registers would need to be returned to ascertain absolute accuracy.





- b) **Members' Scheme of Allowances** - the Clerk and Monitoring Officer advised that she was in the process of publishing the Members' Scheme of Allowances on the website.
- c) **Work Programme** - the Clerk and Monitoring Officer confirmed that the Local Investigation and Hearing procedures following the implementation of the LGPIH (Local Government and Public Involvement in Health) Act would need to be reviewed as they had not been updated for some time. In response to Councillor Adrian Edwards, the Clerk and Monitoring Officer confirmed that copies of the Local Investigation and Hearing procedures were available to Members.
- d) **Training** - the Clerk and Monitoring Officer confirmed, in response to Councillor Andrew Bradley, that, as part of the training and refresher programme, consideration could be given to setting up mock scenarios approximately six months after initial training sessions.

In response to Mr John Giles, the Clerk and Monitoring Officer stated that it might prove difficult to devise a joint rolling training programme with other Unitary Authorities, however she would continue to engage with the Authorities to progress joint training events.

- e) **Members' attendance at meetings** - Councillor Peter Jones felt that the Fire Authority should take into account the reasons for Members' non attendance at Fire Authority and Committee meetings as, on occasion, non attendance was often as a result of a clash of meetings with their own Unitary Authority. The Committee Manager confirmed that, where advised, she recorded the reason(s) for any absences, and that these could be included within future reports. The Clerk and Monitoring Officer reported that Members do not always advise her, or the Committee Manager, of their impending absence at a meeting, nor do they always attempt to find a Substitute Member.
- f) **Other Action Guidance** (*that a Standards Committee might consider in response to a complaint*) - the Chairman, in his opinion, felt that the Standards Board for England's use of language within this document did not realise a clearly understood explanation of the Guidance.

## Resolved:

- a) That the Update Report be Noted.

## 10. MEMBERS' REGISTER OF INTERESTS, INCLUDING GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY RECEIVED

The Clerk and Monitoring Officer made available for inspection the Members' Register of Interests, including gifts and hospitality. The Committee did not have any further comments to make.

## 11. CODE OF CONDUCT - BRIEFING AND ADVICE

The Committee was provided with training on the Code of Conduct by the Clerk and Monitoring Officer, which included an overview of the Code, with key points including the registration and declaration of Interests (*a copy of the training slides are available from the Committee Manager*). The Clerk and Monitoring Officer also referred to the public perceptions of ethics.

The Standards Committee **Agreed** to consider the two Scenarios at the end of the training presentation at its next meeting.



The Standards Committee conveyed its thanks to the Clerk and Monitoring Officer for an informative training presentation.

## 12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING(S)

The Committee **Agreed** that its next meeting on **Thursday 8 October 2009 would now commence at 5pm**. Councillor Peter Jones conveyed his apologies for this meeting.

The Committee **Noted** that its subsequent meeting would take place on Monday 7 December 2009 at 5.30pm (*meeting previously moved from 10 December 2009*).

The above meetings will take place in the Strategic Command Centre, Headquarters, Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

Minutes signed by Chairman as a correct record:

Signature

*Ronald S Webb*

Print Name

*Ronald S Webb*

Date signed:

*13/5/10*