

REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE PUBLICITY SUB-COMMITTEE
(formerly "Working/Discussion Group")
RE: STANDARDS COMMITTEE
held in Crewe on Tuesday 10th March 2009

PRESENT: Nigel Briers (Chair), David Sayer, John Goddard,
Roger Pomlett and Kenneth Edwards (on behalf of Patsy
Barnett from whom apologies were received)

The Sub-Committee met at the conclusion of the meeting of the full Standards Committee convened for 10.00 am during the course of which the Sub-Committee was (a) renamed "Publicity Sub-Committee" and (b) authorised to continue working to promote awareness of the Standards Committee, its purpose and objectives.

PUBLICITY/INFORMATION

Nigel Briers and Roger Pomlett circulated written ideas and suggestions for consideration within the wider discussion which followed and in conclusion emphasised the need to adopt a positive approach summarised under three heads, viz –

- (a) maintaining high standards of conduct, integrity and good governance in local administration;
- (b) close scrutiny at all times of the conduct and efficiency of members both in committee and public life;
- (c) outlining the remedies and procedure should a lapse occur and complaint(s) be lodged

In the course of this discussion, the Sub-Committee stressed the need that while advocating wide circulation of the proposed leaflet and other publicity media, care should be taken to avoid the promotion of a complaints culture. Concern was expressed in relation to delay and the length of time taken to process and resolve complaints, these being matters to be considered further as the work of the Sub-Committee is developed.

PROPOSED LEAFLET

The Sub-Committee now considered the narrower issues of the form and content of the proposed leaflet, the targets and means of distribution, suggested contributors, size and graphic design. In addition, copies of the recently published "Cheshire East News" were submitted and it was AGREED that the Sub-Committee should contribute on a regular basis.

Members expressed a willingness to undertake specific tasks as detailed –

Roger Pomlett would draft a foreword to the leaflet and compile suggestions for the content of an introductory note from an authoritative figure within Cheshire East;

Kenneth Edwards agreed to speak to known contacts with regard to the cover, graphics and design and if possible to secure a “mock up” in time for the next meeting of the sub-Committee (see post);

David Sayer would look at the question of membership and constitution of the Standards Committee and submit a draft of the proposed section dealing with this aspect;

Nigel Briers undertook to prepare a guidance and summary of the procedure for making a complaint and an explanatory note in relation to the sequence of events once a complaint has been lodged;

John Goddard agreed to act as intermediary with a view to arranging a meeting with the Leader of the Council/Chief Executive/Monitoring Officer and representatives of the Sub-Committee within the timescale 25th to 29th May 2009 (it being envisaged that a draft of the proposed leaflet would be available for submission and consideration at such meeting)

NEXT MEETING

In the course of detailed discussion, the need for an editorial meeting of the Sub-Committee became apparent and it was agreed that this would be held at Crewe (East Committee Room) on Tuesday, 28th April 2009 at 10.30 am. Members, in the meantime, would address the several matters under discussion at this meeting with a view to formulating firm and final proposals at such editorial meeting.