

STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES - 17 OCTOBER 2011

Present: Mr J Hicks (Chair);
Mrs T Barnes and Reverend Canon B Shenton;
Councillors Beard, Livingston, Skeats and Watson;
Apologies: Councillor Rynn.

RESOLVED ITEMS

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATION

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report requesting the Committee to consider five individual applications for dispensations from Lead Councillors to allow them to attend the Cabinet to consider and vote on an item concerning a proposed investment in the Berkshire-wide Credit Union - Community Savings & Loans (CSL) Ltd. The applications for dispensations had been submitted because of the requirement, in the Members' Code of Conduct ("the Code"), for Councillors to declare a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter where the decision could affect their financial position or the financial position of a relevant person described in paragraph 8(2) of the Code.

The Code stated that a councillor had a personal interest in business of the authority where it related to, or was likely to affect, any body of which you were a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you were appointed or nominated by your authority. This would also apply if a member of your family or any person with whom you had a close association was a member of the body.

The advice set out in the report was that members of the Credit Union would have a financial interest in the outcome of a report before Cabinet, which asked the Cabinet to consider the principle of investing in the Credit Union. As the decision would be likely to affect the financial position of Credit Union members it would establish a prejudicial interest amongst Councillors who had directly invested in the Union or whose relatives or close associates had done so. The consequence of this would be that they would have to leave the meeting whilst the item was being considered. Cabinet had a membership of 9 and a quorum of four, one of whom must be the Leader or Deputy Leader, and so the meeting would potentially not have sufficient members for a quorum and therefore it would not be possible to transact this item of business.

The Committee was advised that if it was minded to grant a dispensation to some or all of the applicants, it would be required to decide the period of time that the dispensation would be active for, up to a maximum of four years. The Monitoring Officer would be required to keep a record of any dispensations granted in writing and record it in the Members' Register of Interests.

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Resolved -

- (1) That, in accordance with The Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) (Dispensation) Regulation 3, the applications for dispensations, received from Councillors Eden, Ennis, Lovelock, Page and Tickner, to attend the Cabinet and to consider and vote on the Berkshire-wide Credit Union - Community Savings & Loans (CSL) Ltd item be granted;
- (2) That, in accordance with The Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) (Dispensation) Regulation 3(2)(a), the dispensation set out in (1) above be granted to Councillors Eden, Ennis, Lovelock, Page and Tickner on this occasion to enable the Cabinet to reach a decision on the forthcoming item concerning a proposed investment in the Berkshire-wide Credit Union - Community Savings & Loans (CSL) Ltd;
- (3) That, in accordance with The Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) (Dispensation) Regulation 4 a copy of these Minutes granting the dispensation referred to in (1) above be kept with the Members' Register of Interests established and maintained under Section 81(1) of the Local Government Act 2000;
- (4) That the Council be requested to consider and receive these Minutes at its next available meeting.

(The meeting commenced at 6.24pm and closed at 6.45pm).

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