

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND ESSEX FIRE  
AUTHORITY JOINT STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL,  
CHELMSFORD, ON 24 FEBRUARY 2010**

Membership

**Appointed by Essex County  
Council**

**Independent Members:**

- \* Professor R M Atkinson  
(Chairman)
- \* Mr D Farrow
- \* Mr A French (Vice-Chairman)

Mr C Jackman

**Councillors:**

C Pond  
Mrs M Fisher  
Mrs E Hart (Chairman of the  
Council, ex officio)

- \* M Mackrory
- \* J Pike
- \* D Robinson
- K Twitchen
- \* R Walters
- \* Mrs M Webster
- \* Present

**Appointed by Essex Fire  
Authority**

**Independent Member:**

Mr M Goodswen

**Councillors:**

S McPherson (Thurrock Borough  
Council)

- \* R Pearson (Essex County Council)
- D White (Southend Borough  
Council)

The following officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

Alex Hallam  
Vivien Door

Deputy County Solicitor  
Committee Officer

**1. Apologies**

The Committee Officer reported apologies from County Councillors M Fisher, Mrs E Hart C Pond, K Twitchen, Mr M Goodswen and Mr C Jackman.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman with the following amendment:

Minute 52, The Conduct of a Hearing: The Committee agreed to view the DVD prepared by Standards for England and to discuss any matters arising from it after the meeting had closed as some Members had a clash of meetings. It was agreed that further copies of the DVD would be made available.

**4. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman had nothing he wished to report at this meeting.

**5. Variation in the Order of Business**

The Chairman proposed a variation in the order of business taking Item 10, The Monitoring Officer, as the next item of business, and the remaining items in the order of the agenda.

**6. The Monitoring Officer**

The Committee received an oral update from Philip Thomson, the Monitoring Officer.

Philip Thomson had been appointed as the Monitoring Officer at the last Council meeting. He informed the Committee that he would attend its meetings on a regular basis. Alex Hallam had been appointed as the Deputy Monitoring Officer; she would continue to support the Standards Committee. Shirley Jarlett had been appointed as the second Deputy Monitoring Officer, to support the Committee when Alex was unavailable.

An officer working group would be looking at Essex County Council's Corporate Governance; a paper would be brought to Standards Committee in Summer 2010. The Standards Committee would then be given the opportunity to consider its overall role within the Corporate Governance of the Council and consider whether there were areas, in addition to those on which it currently focuses, in which it would be interested in participating. The Committee does report to the Council and its reports could include any recommendations if the remit of the Committee were to be changed. An example was given, where another Local Authority's Standards Committee has scrutinised the Audit of Fraud; others have extended their terms of reference to include a wide range of issues.

**7. Constitutional and Procedural Matters**

The Committee considered the Constitutional and Procedural Matters report, SC/01/10, from Colin Ismay, the Governance Officer.

**Resolved:**

The Committee agreed the Deputy Monitoring Officer would amend the report accordingly.

That the Deputy Monitoring Officer would update the procedures for Independent Member Interviews, looking at best practice from other Local Authorities for the next meeting.

**6. Members' Term of Office**

The Committee considered report SC/002/10 by the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

**Resolved:**

That the Committee agreed that the Independent Member who had served an eight year period on the Fire Authority Standards Committee be invited

to serve for a further four year period on this new joint Committee, and that exceptionally on this occasion the appointment should not involve a recruitment process.

**7. Standards for England Bulletin**

The Committee received the content of Bulletin 46. Members noted the information in regard to the Forward Plan. The plans to amend the Code of Conduct for Members were noted to have been discontinued for the time being.

**8. Assessing the Impact of Standards Committees**

The Committee considered the Report published in October 2009 and noted its useful content.

**9. Forward Look**

The Committee considered the Forward Look, SC/004/10 and agreed that the Annual Report should be added to this document.

**Resolved:**

The Governance Officer would bring a report on the Local Authority Website to the next meeting.

**10. Date and Time of Future Meeting(s)**

The Committee received the future meeting dates report for 2010/11 from Vivien Door, Committee Officer.

**Resolved:**

The Committee Agreed the future meeting dates for 2010/11.

Monday 29 March 2010 at 10.00 am in Committee Room 1.

Thursday 29 April 2010 at 10.00 am in Committee Room 2

Wednesday 26 May 2010 at 10.00 in Committee Room 1

Wednesday 23 June 2010 at 10.00 in Committee Room 1

Wednesday 21 July 2010 at 10.00 in Committee Room 2

Wednesday 22 September 2010 at 10.00 in Committee Room 2

Thursday 21 October 2010 at 10.00 in Committee Room 2

Thursday 25 November 2010 at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 2

Thursday 16 December 2010 at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 2

Tuesday 25 January 2011 at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 2

Wednesday 23 February 2011 at 10.00 am in Committee Room 2

Monday 28 March 2011 at 10.00 in Committee Room 2

Wednesday 27 April 2011 at 10.00 in Committee Room 2

Wednesday 25 May 2011 at 10.00 in Committee Room 2

**9. Exclusion of the Public**

As there was no Part 2 business the Chairman closed the meeting at 15.40.

Chairman  
29 March 2010