



PRESENT:

Members: Miss S Skelton (Chairman), Mr D Lomas (Vice Chairman), Mr D Bambridge, Mrs A Crowe JP, Mr R Palmer, Mr R Sellars, Dr B Wookey, Mr J Walker

Officers: Mr J Davidson (Monitoring Officer), Mr J King (Committee and Administration Officer)

Apologies: None

14/10. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND/OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

None.

15/10. MINUTES – 8 SEPTEMBER 2010

Resolved:	Responsible Officer:
1. That the minutes of the meeting held on the 8 September 2010 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.	-

16/10. ACTION SUMMARY

Resolved:	Responsible Officer:
1. That the Action Summary be noted.	-

17/10. COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2010/2011

Resolved:	Responsible Officer:
1. That progress with the Committee Work Plan for 2010/11 be noted.	-

18/10. STANDARDS INDICATORS: FINAL QUARTER 2010/2011

Members noted with concern a reported decrease in Member attendance at Authority and Committee meetings for the final quarter of 2010/11 compared with the corresponding period for 2009/10 and with the previous quarter. It was suggested that if the trend were to continue then Members should be required to give reasons for their absences, if not volunteered. The Chairman of Audit, Risk and Governance Committee advised that the maintenance of activity had already been identified as a risk in the Authority's Critical Risk Register and as such was already being carefully monitored.

Resolved: 1. That the report be noted.	Responsible Officer: -
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19/10. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION DISCLOSURE LOG 2010/2011

Resolved: 1. That the Disclosure Log attached to the report be noted.	Responsible Officer: -
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20/10. FUTURE ROLE OF THE ETHICAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Committee and Administration Officer invited the Committee to review its role in light of Government proposals to abolish Standards for England and police authorities by May 2012. This would also signal the demise of the national Code of Conduct and the requirement for relevant authorities (including police authorities) to have a standards committee. The report set out the key requirements and functions of the Committee and included a brief commentary to suggest how these might be taken forward during the transition to directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). It was explained that the Authority was obliged under existing legislation to retain the Committee so that it could deal with any complaints about Member conduct. However, Members were asked to consider whether it would still necessary for the Committee to continue to meet in order to discharge its ethical governance role.

Members questioned whether the new Police and Crime Panels would eventually become the body charged with holding PCCs to account for issues of conduct and probity. The Monitoring Officer indicated that these Panels would be responsible for the informal resolution of less serious complaints. The IPCC would be responsible for investigating more serious complaints for example, criminal offences or corrupt behaviour.

Following a number of further questions and comments, Members agreed that whilst dates of forthcoming meetings up to the end of 2010/11 should be retained, it was unlikely that the Committee would need to be convened again unless it was to consider a Member complaint or following a request to the Chairman in consultation with the Chief Executive and/or the Monitoring Officer.

Resolved: That 1. the Report be noted;	Responsible Officer: -
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<p>2. the dates of Committee meetings up to the end of 2010/11 be retained;</p> <p>3. the Committee be convened:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in the event of a complaint being recorded against a member of the Authority; - following a request to the Chairman in consultation with the Chief Executive and/or Monitoring Officer. 	<p>-</p> <p>CE / MO / CAO</p>
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21/10. ANNOUNCEMENT

The Committee and Administration Officer advised Members that this would be the last ordinary Committee meeting that John Davidson would be attending as Monitoring Officer, following his decision to step down from the role at the end of May 2011. The Chairman and Members warmly thanked Mr Davidson for his valued support and guidance and wished him well for the future.

CHAIRMAN