

THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND
Board Meeting

Board Room
1st Floor, Cottons Centre
Cottons Lane, London SE1 2QG
18 May 2005
10.00am – 12.00pm

Meeting Minutes

Present: Sir Anthony Holland, Chair
Patricia Hughes, CBE, Deputy Chair
Peter Chalke, CBE
Professor Alan Doig
Margaret Pratt
Paul Sabapathy, CBE
Roger Taylor

Apologies: Cllr Louise Bloom
John Bowers QC
Celia Cameron, CBE

In attendance: David Prince, Chief Executive
Tim Bogan, Communications Manager
Chris Boothman, Head of Legal Services
Allister Duncan, Head of Corporate Services
Kathy Farrand, Head of Referrals Unit
Paul Hoey, Head of Policy and Guidance
Lisa Klein, Head of Investigations

Observers: Anne Rehill, Senior Policy Adviser
Celia Cook, Press Officer

ACTION

- 05/52 Apologies**
Louise Bloom, John Bowers and Celia Cameron.
- 05/53 Minutes of Board Meeting held on 17 March 2005 (Open Session)**
The minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2005 were approved and signed by the Chair.
- 05/54 Matters Arising**
Minute 05/28: Declarations of Interest: the Deputy Chair advised that her term with SOLACE as Interim Chief Executive of the London Borough of Sutton is likely to be for four months.
- 05/55 Declaration of Board Member interests and forthcoming engagements**
The Chair advised that he is speaking at a forthcoming meeting of CIPFA Northern Ireland.
The Chief Executive reported declarations from **John Bowers** that he is dealing with matters arising at the London Borough of Ealing and also with matters concerning a former Bradford councillor.
Alan Doig declared that he is informally advising a Welsh television company about issues relating to Cardiff City Council.
- 05/56 Team Briefing**
The Board noted the report and asked Roger Taylor to lead on items in the absence of Celia Cameron.

05/57	<p>The Role and Effectiveness of the Standards Board for England – the findings of the House of Commons ODPM: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee</p> <p>The Board <u>agreed</u> the comments in the grid subject to certain amendments discussed at the meeting. They noted that in respect of Item 8 (Notification of Allegations) that a discussion paper will be taken to the next Board Referrals Panel on 8 June 2005.</p>	
05/58	<p>Local Resolution Project</p> <p>The Board <u>agreed</u> in principle to the Local Resolution Project to be conducted as a pilot project by the Standards Board for England in association with Melton Borough Council. This was subject to a proposal taking into account their discussion being taken to the Board Referrals Panel on 8 June 2005.</p>	
05/59	<p>Disclosure and Publication Issues</p> <p>The Board <u>agreed</u> the recommendations as follows:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Referrals Team should retain the policy of referring anonymous complaints for investigation only in exceptional circumstances; b. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act, the Standards Board for England should, where possible, seek to protect the identity of any relevant informant; c. The Head of Referrals should allow complaints to be withdrawn prior to referral for investigation unless there is an overriding public interest not to do so; d. Published case summaries should not contain the identity of the complainant; e. Case studies should be developed as a learning tool for members and the public; f. In the case of “A” findings, case summaries should remain on the website for six months from closure. Other case summaries will be removed after two years or the end of the period of the sanction, whichever is the longer period; g. Case summaries will be published for all local hearings. 	
05/60	<p>Assessing Written Allegations</p> <p>The Board approved the permanent establishment of the preliminary enquiries scheme and noted that they will receive periodic progress updates as and when required.</p>	HRU
05/61	<p>Business Continuity Plan</p> <p>The Board <u>adopted</u> the plan.</p>	
05/62	<p>Influencing Parliament</p> <p>The Board <u>agreed</u> with the suggestion to engage with individual members of both Houses as appropriate. It was also suggested that a further meeting with Caroline Spelman MP would be constructive and that there should be particular engagement with Greater Manchester MPs, probably at the start of the new session.</p>	HP&G Comms.Mgr.
05/63	<p>Political Parties Elections and Referendums Act</p> <p>The Board <u>agreed</u> that officers should discuss the implications further with the Electoral Commission with a view to ensuring there is consistency between its regime and a revised version of the Code.</p>	HP&G
05/64	<p>Corporate Planning – outline Plan for 2006/09</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Board <u>agreed</u> the approach to the production of the 2006/09 Corporate Plan, and that a first draft of the plan should be considered by the Quality and Strategy panel at its meeting in June and at the Board meeting in July. b. The Board also <u>agreed</u> that the Quality and Strategy Panel receive the addendum at its June meeting and the Board meeting in July. 	HP&G
05/65	<p>Chief Executive’s Report</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Board received the Report. b. The Board <u>agreed</u> to the establishment of a Legal Proceedings Panel with Terms of Reference as appended to the Report following assurance that a 	

matter, such a decision to JR, would be discussed with the full Board. Membership was agreed as Patricia Hughes and John Bowers.

- c. The Board also agreed that the Chair and/or Deputy Chair could sign off the Annual Report and Annual Review. HP&G
- d. The Board further agreed that they wish to hold the 21 September Away Day at a venue in London followed by dinner at the Athenaeum. There will be a Board Meeting on 22 September. EA

05/66 Referrals Unit Report

The Board noted the report.

05/67 Investigations Report

The Board noted the report. Roger Taylor asked about the PwC report, which would be presented to the Board Investigations Panel. Hol

05/68 Finance Report

The Board noted the report.

05/69 Human Resources Report

The Board noted the report. They were particularly pleased to note the steady state of staff numbers bearing in mind the relocation.

05/70 Information Technology Report

The Board noted the report. The Head of Corporate Services was asked to investigate the provision of wider remote access. HCS

05/71 Year end key performance indicators 2004/05

The Board noted the performance against the KPIs and agreed that these figures, which they felt to be satisfactory overall, will be reported in the Annual Report. They also noted that KPIs for 2005/06 which had been previously agreed by the Board in their approval of the Corporate Plan. They further noted that monthly updates on performance against the 2005/06 KPIs and other performance information would be provided in the bulletin to Board members. HP&G

05/72 Review of risk management

The Board noted the report.

05/73 – Closed Items

05/77 The Board then went into closed session to consider confidential matters.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 13 July 2005 at 10.00am

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Chair