

THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND

Board Meeting

Board Room
1st Floor, Cottons Centre
Cottons Lane, London SE1 2QG
8 September 2004
10.00am – 1.00pm

Meeting Minutes

- Present: Sir Anthony Holland, Chair
Patricia Hughes, CBE, Deputy Chair
Cllr Celia Cameron, CBE
Cllr Peter Chalke, CBE
Professor Alan Doig
Margaret Pratt
Paul Sabapathy, CBE
Roger Taylor
- Apologies: John Bowers QC
- 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
Steve Kingston Ethical Standards Officer
Natalie Birtle, Ethical Standards Officer (Item 04/171 only)
- Observers: Alison Batey, Investigations Manager
David Brewer, Policy Adviser
Vicky Bryan, Senior HR Adviser
John Lowe, Principal Referrals Case Manager
Andrew Plummer, Investigator
Anne Rehill, Senior Policy Advisor

ACTION

- 04/156 Apologies**
John Bowers
- 04/157 Minutes of Board Meeting held on 21 July 2004 (Open Session)**
The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July were approved and signed by the Chair.
- 04/158 Matters Arising**
None.
- 04/159 Declaration of Board Member interests and forthcoming engagements**
- David Prince declared on behalf of John Bowers that he has been instructed by Northumberland County Council and North and South Tyneside District Councils in relation to non Standards Board issues.
 - Roger Taylor declared that he is no longer Interim Chief Executive of Doncaster City Council.
 - Patricia Hughes advised that she is representing the Standards Board at SOLACE events in Winchester and Reigate.
 - Roger Taylor advised that he is representing the Standards Board at the NE LGA in Newcastle on 22 September 2004.

- Margaret Pratt will be representing the Standards Board at the Staffordshire Parish Councils Assembly on 9 September and also at an event in Warwick.
- Peter Chalke is representing the Standards Board in Shropshire on 30 September.
- Sir Anthony Holland is representing the Standards Board in Northamptonshire on 23 October.

04/160 Team Briefing

The Board noted the report.

04/161 Board Meetings and Panels 2005

The Board deferred making a decision on the frequency of Board Meetings until the October Board at which they wish to see a proposal on how Board Panels will operate, their membership, terms of reference and what the constitutional set up is in relation to delegations. However, they did agree that the first meeting of 2005 would take place on 19 January.

CE

04/162 Agenda for Board Away Day – 20 October 2004

The Board agreed with the recommendation to structure the day as a whole to give adequate coverage of the Corporate Plan and various recommendations from research commissioned in 2003/04. They also agreed the suggested agenda for the afternoon session and to have a Board dinner on the evening of 19 October.

HP&G

04/163 Graham Committee

Moved to closed items

04/164 Service Complaints

The Board agreed in principle with the recommendation to adapt the current service complaints procedure to include an independent arbiter. However, they wished to consider further information at the October Board relating to the terms of reference and also want to see costings, including suggested remuneration, before making a final decision.

HP&G

04/165 MPs Code of Conduct

The Board noted the contents of the paper and agreed that a response should be made to the consultation. They further agreed that this response would be agreed with the Chair prior to the October Board to enable it to meet the consultation deadline. The response will be circulated to Board members.

HP&G

04/166 Confidentiality of ESO Reports

The Board did not agree with the recommendation to approve in principle the adoption of a policy that will allow ESO final reports with an 'a' or a 'b' finding to be released as an open document. They asked for this matter to be held over and brought back to them with more detail as to how it might operate in practice.

HP&G

04/167 Euro Conversion Plan

The Board approved the plan.

04/168 Chief Executive's Report

The Board received the Chief Executive's Report. The following action was noted:-

CE

- Board members asked to be kept advised of the progress of the Indemnities provisions through the House
- Board members to be sent the consultation document on the Code of Conduct for Officers
- Board agenda for October to include an item on the Joint Steering Group (the work being done with the Audit Commission and IDeA)

The Board also noted the intention for a review of the Standards Board to take place in 2006.

- 04/169 Annual Assembly Update**
The Board received the report.
- 04/170 Referrals Unit Report**
The Board noted the report.
- 04/171 SESO Report**
The Board noted the report and the verbal update from Natalie Birtle, ESO for Holding Bay Team.
- 04/172 Finance Report**
The Board noted the report.
- 04/173 Human Resources Report**
The Board noted the report.
- 04/174 Information Technology Report**
The Board noted the report.
- 04/175 Clarification on (A) and (B) Findings**
The Board noted Rabinder Singh QC's recent advice.
- 04/163 Closed Items**
+ The Board then went into closed session to consider confidential matters.
04/176
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04/182

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 20 October 2004 at 10.00am and will be followed by the Board "Away Day" to be held at Cottons Centre

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Chair