THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND
Board Meeting

Board Room
1st Floor, Cottons Centre
Cottons Lane, London SE1 2QG
8 December 2004
10.00am – 12.15pm

Meeting Minutes

Present:	Sir Anthony Holland, Chair Cllr Louise Bloom Cllr Celia Cameron, CBE Cllr Peter Chalke, CBE Professor Alan Doig Margaret Pratt Paul Sabapathy, CBE Roger Taylor
Apologies:	Patricia Hughes, CBE, Deputy Chair 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 Lisa Klein, Head of Investigations
Observers:	Amy Berrisford, HR Advisor Anne Rehill, Senior Policy Advisor Michelle Witton, Senior Policy Advisor (items 04/212 – 04/218 only)

ACTION

04/212 Apologies
Patricia Hughes and John Bowers

04/213 Minutes of Board Meeting held on 20 October 2004 (Open Session)
Minute 04/186 - Margaret Pratt asked for it to be noted that Anne Rehill accompanied her to Warwickshire and West Midlands County Association on 27 October, not Paul Hoey. Following this correction, the minutes of the meeting held on 20 October were approved and signed by the Chair.

04/214 Matters Arising
None.

04/215 Declaration of Board Member interests and forthcoming engagements
Celia Cameron:
- Has been appointed to the East of England Development Agency and has come off the Regional Assembly.

Roger Taylor:
- Has been commissioned by Peterborough City Council to do some work on their schools building programme.

04/216 Team Briefing
The Board noted the report and also agreed that team briefings should take place on a monthly basis with the senior management team setting the core brief when

no Board meeting is available to do this.

04/217 Implementing the regulations for local investigation

The Board made various suggestions about the proposals and particularly asked for further clarification around paragraph 24(i) and the relative responsibility with regard to judicial review. They noted, however, that a recommendation by an Ethical Standards Officer to seek judicial review would require the approval of the Board in view of the resources that would be required. Officers also noted the suggestion made by Alan Doig and will take forward the suggestion of pulling together best practice guidance on the conduct of investigations using the experience of similar organisations.

HLS

HP&G

04/218 Code Review Consultation Paper

The Board gave their views on the current draft. They also agreed that the consultation should be held back until the outcome of the Graham Committee review is known and that a statement can be placed on the website so that stakeholders know of the delay and the reasons. The Board further agreed that the draft document could be shared with stakeholders such as the ODPM and the Graham Committee. It was noted that a revised document would be brought back to the January 2005 Board meeting.

HP&G

04/219 Problematic Parishes

The Board noted the issues raised and agreed with the suggestions made in paragraph 44 suggesting a number of possible measures that could be taken above and beyond the investigations route. They also noted Peter Chalke's confirmation that the Local Government Association would be happy with a project releasing £50/100,000 via, for example, NALC.

HP&G

04/220 External Communications Strategy

The Board approved the recommendations made in the paper in paragraphs 3, 5 and 6 with regard to the messages, audiences and platforms. This included the proposal to exhibit at the three main party conferences which the Chair confirmed he would be available to attend. However, they did not agree with the suggestion to have a stand at the CCN conference and agreed with Peter Chalke's suggestion that we should "sponsor" one of the events they run during the year. The Board also agreed with the amendments to press and website policy to account for local investigations and ESO directions and the continuation of the existing policy with regard to publicising selected case outcomes. Board members were asked to note the last recommendation requesting suggested contents for *The Case Review III* which should be forwarded to the Communications Manager.

Coms.Mgr

Board

04/221 Annual Assembly 2005

The Board considered and agreed with the recommendation with regard to the suggested direction for the conference and overall theme together with the recommended pricing structure. They confirmed that they would not consider it appropriate for local authorities to exhibit at the event.

Coms.Mgr

04/222 Proposed Budget 2005/06

The Board approved the proposed revenue budget of £9.609 million and a capital expenditure budget of £110,000 and noted that this is consistent with a cash allocation of £9.181 million which is, in turn, based on a 2.7% increase in the 2004/05 cash allocation of £8.94 million. This increase of 2.7% is as advised by the ODPM to be used for planning purposes. However, the Board also noted that the actual cash allocation for 2004/05 has yet to be confirmed by the ODPM and asked for their concern at this to be minuted.

HCS

Board members asked for additional information about the additional staff member in Policy and Guidance and also additional guidance. It was confirmed that this would be considered further at the Quality and Strategy Board Panel Meeting on 15 December 2004.

HP&G

04/223 Board Member Gifts and Hospitality Declarations

The Board agreed that there should be two declarations:- one for declarations specifically related to the Standards Board (paragraph 5 of the report) and one for all gifts and hospitality from relevant authorities/organisations and persons (paragraph 6). However, Board members also agreed amended wording to paragraph 6 as follows: "I declare that, during the financial year 2004/5, the following gifts, benefits and hospitality, with a value of greater than £25, whether accepted or declined, were offered to me by relevant authorities, members of relevant authorities, relevant organisations and persons, in the course of my dealings with them on matters unconnected with the Standards Board for England." **HCS**

04/224 Proposed Terms of Reference and Standing Orders for the Remuneration Committee

The Board approved the Terms of Reference and the Standing Orders with the exception of item 3 of the Standing Orders which should read "as required" and not "three times a year".

04/225 Chief Executive's Report

The Board received the Chief Executive's Report and also approved the amended Terms of Reference of the Investigations Board Panel.

04/226 Referrals Unit Report

The Board noted the report.

04/227 Investigations Report

The Board noted the report. Board members agreed with Roger Taylor's suggestion that it would be useful to re-interview the law firms who have undertaken holding bay cases to get their view on the process.

04/228 Finance Report

The Board noted the report and asked for thanks to be passed to the Finance Team for their strong hold on the finances of the organisation. **HCS**

04/229 Human Resources Report

The Board noted the report.

04/230 Information Technology Report

The Board noted the report.

04/231 – 04/234 Closed Items

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

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 19 January 2005 at 10.00am

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Chair