

**THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND**  
Board Meeting

Board Room  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Cottons Centre  
Cottons Lane, London SE1 2QG  
23 April 2003  
10.00am – 2.30pm

**Meeting Minutes**

Present: Tony Holland, Chair  
Patricia Hughes, CBE, Deputy Chair  
Cllr Celia Cameron, CBE  
Professor Alan Doig  
Margaret Pratt  
Roger Taylor  
Paul Sabapathy, OBE

Apologies: John Bowers QC  
Cllr Peter Chalke, CBE

In attendance: Allan B Cairns, Chief Executive  
Tim Bogan, Communications Manager  
Chris Boothman, Head of Legal Services  
Matt Hammond, Finance Manager (part-time)  
Paul Hoey, Head of Policy and Guidance  
Lisa Klein, Senior Ethical Standards Officer  
Clare Stephenson, Communications Analyst (part-time)  
Bryan Wiggins, IT Manager (part-time)  
Michelle Witton, Senior Policy Advisor (part-time)  
Alex Wood, Acting Team Leader – Referrals Unit

**ACTION**

- 03/53 Apologies**  
John Bowers and Peter Chalke
- 03/54 Minutes of Board Meeting held on 12 March 2003**  
**02/52** –Minute to be amended so that the last sentence of this minute reads “It was agreed (instead of “requested”) .....” The minutes were then approved and signed by the Chair.
- 03/55 Matters Arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2003**  
**03/31 – MSFM** – The Chief Executive reported that the MSFM has been formally accepted.  
**03/37 – Options for closer working with the Audit Commission** – The Head of Policy and Guidance was asked to report back to the Board on the CPA process and issues about corporate governance arising from the CPA.  
**03/40 – Chief Executive’s Report.** The Board resolved that firm letters must be sent to recalcitrant authorities within the next ten days.
- 03/56 Declaration of board member interests**  
Paul Sabapathy declared that he has been appointed to the Committee on Leadership, Management and Governance of the Higher Education Funding Council for England.
- 03/57 Team Briefing**  
The Board noted the report. There was concern that not all members of staff are being briefed. The Chief Executive will ensure that this is addressed. Tim Bogan and Clare Stephenson were thanked for their efforts with the organisation of the

**HP&G**

**CE**

**CE**

Board/Colleague Conference on 9 April 2003.

<b>03/58</b>	<b>RU Report</b> Alex Wood, Acting Team Leader of the Referrals Unit, joined the meeting. The Board noted the report and statistics and asked Alex Wood to thank his team for the extra hours that his team has been working.	<b>Acting Team Leader, RU</b>
<b>03/59</b>	<b>SESO Report and Investigations Productivity</b> The Board noted the report and statistics. They asked whether there is a procedure for circulating positive feedback to staff.	
<b>03/60</b>	<b>Draft Scheme for the Annual Review and Annual Report</b> The Board considered the recommendation for the Annual Review and commented on several points which the Communications Manager advised were already included. The Communications Manager will check whether it can be ready for distribution at the conference on 9/10 June. The Annual Review and Annual Report are to be sent to all Board Members for comments with the Chairman being the final fallback. The Board also asked that future similar reports are targeted to be ready for events such as the Annual Conference if practicable.	<b>Comms.Mgr</b>
<b>03/61</b>	<b>Corporate Plan/Business Plan</b> The Board discussed the recommendations and <u>agreed</u> that the Deputy Chair should work with senior staff to finalise the Corporate Plan and Business Plan for the June Board Meeting.	<b>HP&amp;G</b>
<b>03/62</b>	<b>Draft Guidance on the Section 66 Regulations</b> The Board discussed the recommendations but considered that more work is required on this guidance and that this will be done by a committee of the Board comprising Patricia Hughes, Roger Taylor and Celia Cameron (depending on availability). Input would also be welcomed from John Bowers. The Chief Executive is to organise and report to the Chairman on a weekly basis.	<b>CE</b>
<b>03/63</b>	<b>Report on the Referrals Process</b> The Board <u>agreed</u> with the recommendations that the papers for the weekly Limited Agenda Board Meetings will not be sent out in advance but read on the day of the meeting and that any necessary legal advice will be provided at the meeting so that reports are not held up.	<b>Acting Team Leader, RU</b>
<b>03/64</b>	<b>Hiring of a 4<sup>th</sup> Ethical Standards Officer</b> The Board <u>approved</u> the creation of a 4 <sup>th</sup> Ethical Standards Officer position.	
<b>03/65</b>	<b>Chief Executive's Update</b> The Chief Executive's verbal update was noted. He reported that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The cost of living increase was paid in February backdated to January</li><li>• The Performance Review pay awards were made in April</li><li>• Recruitment for the Head of Referrals and the Head of Corporate Services closes this week</li><li>• Witness fees proposal has been accepted by the ODPM</li><li>• A summary of the North Yorkshire Judicial Review will be sent to Board Members</li><li>• A paper will be brought to the Board on issues arising from the recent APE findings in the "Lincolnshire Police Authority case"</li></ul>	<b>HLS</b> <b>HLS</b>
<b>03/66</b>	<b>Finance Report</b> The Board noted this report.	
<b>03/67</b>	<b>Human Resources Report</b> The Board noted this report and asked for future reports to show more detail of staffing numbers in 3 columns:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contractors where there should be permanent staff</li><li>• Contracts because of workload/flexibility</li></ul>	<b>HR Manager</b>

- Permanent staff

**03/68 Closed minute**

The Board then went into closed session to consider a confidential matter.

**03/69 Case Management System Project**

The Board noted the report.

**03/70 IT Report**

The Board noted the report.

**03/71 Strategic Plan – quarterly update**

The Board noted the report. They requested that future updates should include revised target dates where there had been slippage.

**HP&G**

**03/72 Report on Time Targets**

The Board noted the report and approved the following targets for completing cases referred for investigation:-

- 40% of matters referred completed within 4 months
- 90% of matters referred completed within 6 months
- 97% of matters referred completed within 9 months (the remaining 3% represent cases that exceed the 9 month target due to circumstances beyond the control of the SBE, e.g. investigations held in abeyance pending resolution of criminal proceedings; cases where a party is on an extended holiday abroad or is suffering from an extended illness; or where new matters arise during and particularly towards the end of an investigation, that need to be investigated before a report can be produced.)

**03/73 Guidance Strategy**

The Board agreed the approach to producing guidance, outlined in the guidance strategy and the guidance priorities highlighted in the strategy.

**03/74 Standards Committees Additional Terms of Reference**

The Board agreed the recommendations and asked that guidance be issued to Chairs of Standards Committees direct as part of the guidance programme. They asked the Head of Policy and Guidance keep a watch on whether these additional functions would distract from the core business of Standards Committees and that the research also sought to address this.

**HP&G**

**03/75 Ethical Governance Audit**

The Board disagreed with the recommendation to pursue the development and publication of an Ethical Governance Audit around the general issue of support for councils and asked for a further paper to be brought to the July Board Meeting with a series of alternatives.

**HP&G**

**03/76 Quality Parish Status**

The Board noted the details of Quality Parish status and the work being done with Government and NALC on this issue.

**03/77 Communications Strategy Update**

The Board discussed the recommendations and considered the issue of the publication of case summaries on the SBE website. The Board did not want a one-sided view published on the website and asked officers to consider how this might be achieved.

**Comms.Mgr.**

The Board also noted the recommendations with regard to the parliamentary event (para 9b) and initial proposals for press roadshows (para 5d)

**03/78  
and  
03/79**

**Closed Minute**

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

**The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 4 June 2003 at 10.00am**

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Chair