

# Board minutes

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Meeting:  
Board meeting

Time:  
11.00-15:30

Date:  
7 July 2009

Location:  
Griffin House, Board Room

Attendees:  
Dr Bob Chilton, Chair  
Professor Judy Simons, Deputy Chair  
Lizzie Abderrahim  
Councillor Shirley Flint  
Paul Gott  
Elizabeth Hall  
Councillor Mehboob Khan  
Councillor Stephen Knight  
Councillor Sir Ron Watson

In attendance:  
Glenys Stacey  
Dave Gray  
Paul Hoey  
Tim Leslie  
Richard Scott  
Freda Sharkey

Observers:  
Gary Hickey  
Richard Broom  
Hannah Pearson  
Louisa Fyans

Minutes:  
Claire Chadwick

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Item No.	Subject	Action
09/59	<b>Apologies</b>  Paul Gott	
09/60	<b>Minutes of 19 May 2009 Meeting (open session)</b>  The minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair	
09/61	<b>Matters arising</b>  Paul Hoey tabled the action points from the previous meeting for Board agreement. The Board requested that items be removed from this listing as soon as they had been completed.	PH

**09/62     Declarations of Board member interests**

The Chair asked each Board member to declare any interests.

Professor Judy Simons declared that she was now an Associate of the Higher Education Board

**09/63     Chair's report (oral)**

The Chair welcomed Tim Leslie and Dave Gray, the two new senior management team members, to the meeting.

The forward plan of 2010 Board meetings was discussed and agreed with special attention given to ensure that the autumn party conference dates did not clash with the proposed September Board meeting. The Chair requested that Claire Chadwick circulate the confirmed dates to the Board members.

CC

The Board considered the current fast moving political debate and agreed positioning. The Committee on Standards in Public Life was discussed and the Board agreed they were content with the submission made to them.

PH

The Chair reported back on board members' recent appraisal of his performance and confirmed that he welcomed the feedback given and pledged more discipline on Board debate.

**09/64     Board members' feedback (oral)**

Elizabeth Hall reported that she had attended a local conference about service delivery. The Board noted her conversation with Professor John Tizard about service delivery in a democratic context and requested that she speak to Richard Scott in relation to following this up.

RS

Judy Simons stated that she had attended an equal opportunities event which involved networking with councillors, reporting that she would speak to Richard Scott regarding follow up outside the meeting.

RS

Lizzie Abderrahim informed the Board that the Waverly young film maker's event that she had mentioned at the

previous meeting did not go ahead.

Mehboob Khan reported that he had attended the recent LGA conference and dinner as had Sir Ron Watson. He noted that this had been a useful event.

Stephen Knight had attended the Liberal Democrat group of the LGA.

Shirley Flint informed the Board that she has been asked to attend the independent group office in September in relation to independent councillors on standards committees.

The Board were disappointed at the number of papers that were laid on the table and asked that greater efforts be made to avoid this in future.

SMT

**The meeting was adjourned for 10 minutes for group photos.**

**09/65 Chief Executive's report**

The Chief Executive introduced her report to the Board and presented the updated Corporate Scorecard, HR Dashboard and Risk graphic for review.

The Board noted the corporate scorecard and agreed that good progress is being made. The Board requested a change to the approach on shading.

GS

It was suggested that item 7c relating to the percentage of cases handled in a year could be the subject for a future presentation to the Board. The Chair agreed.

TL

The HR dashboard was noted and it was agreed that this did not require a Board review at every meeting. It was suggested and agreed that it should be presented twice a year which would enable progress or otherwise to be identified more clearly, in a fuller and contextual HR report.

PH

The Board discussion led to a request for more statistics and further analysis in relation to diversity and gender. It was further agreed that an annual report should be presented to the Board regarding the equalities scheme, which would include information on benchmarking, in

PH

particular the Manchester figures in relation to diversity.

The Corporate Risk Graphic was discussed and the Board noted that the position is stable, with a good number of risks poised to move in the right direction.

The report was accepted.

**09/66 Management Information Report**

The Board raised the issue of transparency and requested that dates of all Standards for England Board meetings be added to the website. The Chair suggested a discussion regarding the transparency of the organisation at the September Away Day. This was agreed.

PH/RS

The report was noted.

**09/67 Evaluation of the local standards framework –  
Legislative Review**

(dealt with in the closed section of the meeting)

**09/78 This was a late paper and tabled at the meeting**

**Memorandum of Understanding between the  
Standards Board and the Audit Commission**

The Board noted that both the Audit Commission and Standards for England have undergone significant changes in their respective roles in recent years. This had necessitated the need to update the memorandum of understanding that exists between the two parties.

It was noted that policy practical considerations and legal considerations had been tightened up so that Officers now have a clear understanding.

The Board discussed if there is a case for having a similar arrangement with the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and requested the senior team to look at this to provide clarity. The Board agreed it is imperative that organisations responsible for

regulation are joined up in their work and share information where appropriate.

FS

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Board has previously commissioned relationships with other bodies and agreed IDeA would be a good one to consider.

The report was agreed.

**09/68 The Standards Board's approach to partnerships**

The Board noted that the effective governance of partnerships is an issue of increasing concern and discussed the approach of Standards for England toward the concerns around partnership working in relation to ethics and standards of behaviour. Process and structure was discussed and a concern raised in relation to the disparity of treatment of members.

The Board debated the recommendations and agreed that Standards for England should encourage standards committees to ensure that their local authority ensures the effective ethical scrutiny of partnership arrangements but asked the question – if it is to encourage this, what power will this body have? The Board requested an evidence base to take this forward and suggested printed guidance and the annual returns can look at this issue further

PH/GH

The recommendations at paragraphs 5 and 6 were then agreed with a request that another authority be considered to complement this work.

PH/GH

**09/69 Scheme of Delegation and Appointment of Ethical Standards Officers**

The Board noted that in order to ensure that the planning processes and service delivery of the Board are clear and appropriate it is important to ensure that accountabilities and responsibilities are explicit. The Board also noted that there was a need to embed the new organisational design before looking at this further. The Board thanked Freda Sharkey for her work in tidying up the new arrangements.

The report was agreed.

**09/70**     **Expenses Policy**

The Board noted that at the meeting in May they had considered the guiding and general principles used to underpin the review of the expenses policy.

The Board recognised that arrangements in relation to DDA had been covered and agreed that members over 60 should be asked to purchase a rail card.

The Finance Manager was requested to look at practical arrangements in relation to PAYE and NI.     RB

The report was agreed.

**09/71**     **Annual Review 2008-09**

The plans for this year's Annual Review publication were discussed and the Board offered the observation that a section that talks of Standards for England's achievements would be welcomed.     RS

The report was noted.

**09/72**     **Brand – implementation plan (oral item)**

Richard Scott reported that the new brand went live on 1 July 2009 and handed out copies of the staff newsletter and statement of the mission and values to Board members.

The report was welcomed by the Board.

**09/73**     **Public perceptions of ethics – 2009 findings**

Hannah Pearson joined the meeting and gave a brief overview of the report to the Board.

The Board discussed sharing the results of this survey more widely and suggested it should be published alongside a summary which teases the appropriate media messages out alongside other current research findings.     GH/HP

The Board received the report and requested it be made     GH/HP

available to CSPL

**The Board closed for lunch for 15 minutes and then  
went into closed session**

The next meeting will be held 21 & 22 September 2009

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. M. ...", written above a horizontal line.

Chair