



Board minutes

Meeting:
Board meeting

Time:
13:30 – 16:00

Date:
22 September 2009

Location:
The Midland Hotel

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

Apologies:
Steve Barrow
Elizabeth Hall
Councillor Stephen Knight

In attendance:
Glenys Stacey
Dave Gray
Paul Hoey
Vivienne Horton
Tim Leslie
Freda Sharkey
Richard Scott
Gary Hickey (Item 09/89)
Richard Broom (Item 09/94)

Minutes:
Caroline Matthews

Item No.	Subject	Action
09/78	Apologies Elizabeth Hall Cllr Stephen Knight Steve Barrow	
09/79	Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2009 (open session) The minutes were agreed as a correct record.	
09/80	Matters arising Freda Sharkey informed the Board that the Memorandum of Understanding with the Audit	

Commission has now been agreed.

The Board considered the action points from previous Board meetings. The Board requested that outstanding action points were assessed and updated before the next meeting.

PH/GS

09/81 Declarations of Board member interests

The Chair asked each Board member to declare any new interests.

Professor Judy Simons declared that she was now a governor of Sheffield Hallam University.

Sir Ron Watson declared that he will be a board member of the Solicitors Regulation Authority from 1 January 2010.

Mehboob Khan declared that he is now involved in peer member support for CAA in Leeds, London, and West Midlands.

09/82 Chair's report (oral)

The Chair reported that he attended the Guardian breakfast with Glenys Stacey regarding public confidence in local government on 15 September 2009. Outcomes from the event are due to be published in the newspaper next week.

The Chair confirmed that he is awaiting confirmation from CLG regarding the decisions around continued Board appointments.

The Board received information from the Chair regarding the diversity in public appointments ambassadors' network.

Lizzie Abderrahim informed the Board that she would welcome further opportunities to support the standards committee community. Tim Leslie noted this.

TL

09/83 Board members' feedback (oral)

Shirley Flint reported that she attended the NALC annual conference, where she received a positive reception, and

that she would be attending the SLCC conference in October 2009.

The Chair paid tribute to Shirley's work in the parish sphere.

09/84 Chief Executive's report

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

The Chief Executive requested that feedback on the style of this report be made outside the meeting.

All

The Board noted the corporate scorecard and requested further improvements to the scoring and style of reporting are made in order to report adequate levels of information.

DG

The HR dashboard was noted and it was agreed this will be reviewed again in six months.

GS

The Board welcomed Vivienne Horton's role as equality and diversity champion.

The Board discussed the issue of under reporting regarding disability and considered how openness could be encouraged. The Chair asked that Vivienne Horton note the discussion.

VH

The Board agreed to formally review the organisation's Business Plan at the next meeting.

DG

The Board noted that the position of the Corporate Risk Graphic was stable.

The report was accepted.

The Board agreed that risk 9 'systematic risks not identified' and the mechanisms being identified to manage this risk, should be considered at the next Board meeting.

GS

09/85 Management Information Report

The Board considered the report.

The Board requested that Tim Leslie should monitor the number of investigations not yet complete and update the Board at the next meeting.

TL

The Board agreed that the text for the article on political Board members should be revisited and progress on publication be updated at the next meeting.

GS/RS

The Chair requested that this report be circulated to Board members in colour in future.

CM

The report was noted.

09/86 Standards community event options from 2010

The Board noted that plans for future national events is an issue of concern and discussed the possible future approach of Standards for England and the related risks.

The Board debated the recommendation that Standards for England opts not to run an Annual Assembly in 2010 and chooses instead to run four regional events in the autumn / winter of 2010. By a significant majority the Board declined the recommendation.

RS

The Board agreed to the recommendation to review options for 2011 at a later date.

RS

09/87 Corporate plan objectives 2010-13

The Board noted that the corporate plan objectives have been assessed as appropriate for the organisation for 2010-13 and welcomed the revision in terminology for objective 1.2.

The Board agreed to the recommendation to note and initially approve that there are no significant changes to our strategic objectives for 2010-13.

The report was agreed.

09/88 Use of formal intervention powers

The Board discussed the options and implications regarding formal intervention.

Vivienne Horton confirmed that details of formal intervention powers will be added to the scheme of delegation. VH

The Board considered the recommendations tabled on 21 September 2009.

The Board agreed to the recommendation that it will delegate its powers under Section 57A (6) (b) to issue a direction in respect of an authority's assessment functions to the Director of Risk, with the caveat that the Chair be consulted. VH

The Board agreed to the recommendation that any decision to issue a notice of intention to serve a direction suspending an authority's assessment functions under Section 57D where that decision is following a request from an individual authority or its standards committee will also be delegated to the Director of Risk.

The Board agreed to the recommendation that in all other cases the decision to issue a notice of intention to serve a direction suspending an authority's assessment functions under Section 57D will rest with the Board at either a regular meeting or under existing emergency procedures.

The Board agreed to the recommendation that the Director of Risk be given delegated powers to consider any observations and evidence submitted by the authority in response to the notice of intention and to proceed if appropriate to serve the direction, with the caveat that those cases requiring clarification should come to the Board. VH

The Board agreed to the recommendation that the Director of Risk be given delegated power to amend and revoke the direction, with the caveat that the Chair be consulted. VH

The Board agreed to the recommendation that the Director of Regulation be given delegated powers in relation to Standards for England's assessment functions where we are discharging these on behalf of a local standards committee.

The Board agreed to the recommendation that the Chief Executive be given delegated powers in relation to Standards for England's review functions where we are exercising these on behalf of a local standards committee.

The Board agreed to review use of formal intervention powers in six months.

09/89 Evaluation of the standards framework

Gary Hickey presented the report and confirmed that recommendations from the evaluation will be presented to the Board in January 2010.

GH

The Board agreed with the recommendation to approve the approach to evaluating the standards framework.

The Board agreed the report.

09/90 Local case handling

The Board considered the report prior to item 09/88 and noted the need for clearer guidance on local case handling.

The Board agreed to the recommendation to confirm that Standards for England has a regulatory responsibility to provide reasonable assurance of the quality of local case handling.

The Board agreed to the recommendation that a more systematic approach should be developed to inform how this risk is managed.

The Board agreed to the recommendation that this should be achieved through better use of data that is already collected or potentially available.

The Board agreed to the recommendation that Standards for England develop a set of criteria that defines 'good quality' for local case handling, which may be suitable for use as a self-assessment guide for standards committees.

The Board agreed to the recommendation that Standards for England should not produce an assessment of each individual authority's local case

handling, based either on visits to authorities or office-based file reviews.

The Board also requested that consideration be given to TL
devising a 'maturity model' for assessing local Standards
Committees.

The report was agreed.

The Board went into closed session

The next meeting will be held 17 November 2009.



Chair

