

**ETHICS AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC CENTRE, STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN**  
**16<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2005 (6 PM)**

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**PRESENT:**

Independent Members: Mrs A McDowell (Chairman), C J Brighton (Vice-Chairman), Rev J Cox.

Councillors: S J M Clee, Mrs A Poole, J A Shaw and T Whatmore.

Observer: Councillor N Desmond

**ES.1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs I M Dolan, Mrs S M Hayward, Mrs P V Hayward R Hobson P Dyke and J Simmonds.

**ES.2 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES**

Councillor S J M Clee was appointed as a substitute for Councillor Mrs P V Hayward.

Councillor J A Shaw was appointed as a substitute for Councillor C D Nicholls.

Councillor Mrs A Poole was appointed as a substitute for Mrs S M Hayward.

**ES.3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No Member declared an interest in any item on the agenda

**ES.4 MINUTES**

**DECISION : The Minutes of the meeting held on the 29<sup>TH</sup> March 2005 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**ES.5 COMMUNITY HOUSING GROUP BOARD MEMBER PAYMENT**

A report was considered from the Monitoring Officer that asked Members to consider a request from the Community Housing Group Board in respect of payments to Members who sit on their Board. The Community Housing Group Board was consulting Wyre Forest District Council as a stakeholder because it nominates 6 members to sit on the Board with the other 6 independent members and 6 tenant representatives.

The Monitoring Officer had asked a previous Member of the Community Housing Group Board - Councillor Nathan Desmond, to attend the meeting to

outline his experience of being a member of the Community Housing Group Board and the work that is expected of a board member.

Councillor Desmond related his experiences over the last 2 years. He perceived it was a role that could not be taken lightly. Although meetings were cyclical, he found that most weeks he had a meeting to attend. Sub Committees were formed from the main committees and it was necessary to attend these meetings. Also the role required a great deal of familiarisation of the internal dynamics of the Housing Company and it was necessary to undergo a certain amount of training.

Board meetings were never less than 2 hours duration and agendas for these meetings were thick and required preparatory reading in advance. Committee meetings other than board meetings usually lasted at least one and a half to two hours. Again, agendas were relatively large. It was also necessary to seek clarification from officers of the Housing Company before the meetings in order to be fully briefed. The Housing Company also held weekends away, which comprised of seminars and discussions.

A discussion ensued on the merits of paying Housing Company Board Members. It was noted that during the original discussions about whether Members who were appointed to represent the Council on the Housing Company should be paid an allowance, this suggestion was turned down. The reason being that it was not felt to be fair if a third of the Board received remuneration and the other two thirds (the tenant and independent members) did not.

Members acknowledged the amount of time that the Council's representatives were required to spend on Housing Company business and recognised the associated degree of responsibility. Members also noted that other Housing Companies had decided to remunerate their board members and that other Housing Companies were likely to follow.

**DECISION:**

**The Committee would have no objection to:**

- (i) Wyre Forest Community Housing paying an allowance to their board members.**
- (ii) Wyre Forest Community Housing having a scheme to pay special enhanced payment should be made to those members of the Community Housing Group who take on special responsibilities such as Chairmanship of of the Housing Group's Committees.**

The meeting finished at 6.30 pm.,