



## Minutes

### Members present:

Mr D.W. Prodger MBE (Chairman), Brig. P. Jones CBE (Vice-Chairman), Mr T. Bean, Mr B. Bullock, Mrs. M Bunker, Mr. J. Champion, Mr J. Cairns, Mrs. L. Duffy, Mr. A. Hardman, Mrs. L. Hodgson, Mrs. G. Hopkins, Mrs. F. Oborski, Mr. C. Smith, Mr. T. Spencer, Mr. K. Taylor, Mr J.Thomas, Mr G. Yarranton.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted from:

Mrs. M Lloyd-Hayes, Mrs. J. Potter, Mr. R. Udall, Mr. P. Watts.

### 2. Declaration of Interests (if any)

The Chairman invited Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests against any of the Agenda items. No interests were declared.

### 3. Exclusion of Public and Press

In the opinion of the Clerk to the Authority, agenda item 4 (Settlement of Legal Claim) was likely to disclose information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) and information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

It was therefore recommended that the meeting should not be open to the public and press at the time that item 4 was considered.

***RESOLVED that the public and the press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of item 4, Settlement of Legal Claim.***

### 4. Settlement of Legal Claim

The Chairman presented the recommendations contained in report FRA014/12 and a discussion ensued with regards to the content of the report. Mr Mark Greenburgh, representing the Authority's external solicitors answered questions from Members regarding various legal issues. The Treasurer, Mr Martin Reohorn, responded to the questions in relation to financial matters.

[Cllr Bunker left the meeting at 4.26pm].

It was suggested by a Member that recommendation iv) of the report should be strengthened to read *“the Clerk, in consultation with the Authority Chairman and Vice Chairman, be given authority to make any minor amendments to the Compromise Agreement that are necessary for its conclusion”*. The amendment was agreed.

***RESOLVED that recommendations i), ii) and iii) be approved as set out in the report FRA014/12 and that recommendation iv) be approved, as amended.***

## **5. Readmission of the Press and Public**

A motion was passed to readmit the press and public to the meeting.

## **6. Changes to the Standards Regime**

The Clerk to the Authority, Mrs Anne Brown entered the meeting to present various changes to the Standards Regime which were necessary in the light of regulations recently published in respect of the Localism Act 2011.

The Chairman proposed that recommendation vii) of the report be amended to read *“any Authority Members interested in taking a seat on the new Standards Committee inform the Authority Chairman and that the Authority agrees the members’ allowance of £1354.68 per annum for the office of Standards Committee Chairman”*.

The proposed amendment was agreed.

**RESOLVED that:**

- i) the draft Code of Conduct as attached at Appendix 1 be adopted;***
- ii) the proposed pool of independent persons including independent persons from Herefordshire and Worcestershire be utilised in relation to any breaches of the Code of Conduct;***
- iii) a new Standards Committee be established to replace the existing Standards Committee;***
- iv) the terms of reference for the Standards Committee as set out at Appendix 2 be adopted;***
- v) the framework for addressing Code of Conduct complaints and any necessary investigations attached at Appendix 3 be adopted;***
- vi) the sanctions for any breaches by a Member of the Code of Conduct as set out at Appendix 4 be agreed;***
- vii) any Authority Members interested in taking a seat on the new Standards Committee inform the Authority Chairman and that the Authority agrees the members’ allowance of £1354.68 per annum for the office of Standards Committee Chairman;***
- viii) the current independent members of the Standards Committee who have expressed a desire to become independent persons (i.e.***

***Mr. Richard Gething, Mr. Murray Mylechreest and Mr. David Stevens MBE) are appointed as independent persons pending the formation of the Worcestershire Independent Persons Poll;***

- ix) training for Members on the new Code be mandatory; and***
- x) the Head of Legal Services be asked to source two independent members for recommendation to the new Standards Committee for their appointment.***

The Chairman informed Members that this was the final meeting to be attended by the Clerk, Mrs. Anne Brown who was due to leave the Authority on 31 July 2012. On behalf of the Authority, the Chairman thanked Mrs. Brown for all her advice and support over the past three years, and wished her well for the future.

The meeting concluded at 4.55 pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_