AT A MEETING of the HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY STANDARDS COMMITTEE held at The Castle, Winchester on 16 June, 2011

PRESENT:

Mr. M. James (Independent Member – Chairman); Mrs. J. Frankum; D. Harrison; R. Kimber.

Other Independent members: Mr. R. Farrall and Mr. F.H.M. Quick.

28 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C. Carter, F. Jonas and Jacqui Hancock.

29 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that, where they believed that they had a personal or personal prejudicial interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, they should, normally at the time of the debate, declare their interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Fire Authority's Code of Conduct, consider whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Code.

There were no declarations of interest made by Members under this item.

30 **DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations.

31 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 December, 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

32 **LOCALISM BILL UPDATE**

Pursuant to Minute 27 of the last meeting on proposed changes to the standards regime and related Localism Bill, the Committee considered the communications from the Chief Executive of the Local Government Association (Item 5 in the Minute Book) on the progress of the Localism Bill and the existing provisions in legislation should the Standards Board be abolished as expected when the Bill became law. Members were invited to comment upon whether the existing provisions in legislation on maintaining the standards regime in relation to the Fire Authority were sufficient or whether something further was required.

During a full discussion Members all agreed that public perception was very important and that, whilst in their view not all of the requirements of the existing standards regime which the Fire Authority was required to follow were necessary

, something needed to take its place. It was suggested that a simple statement of values by which Members should abide would suffice . It might include such things as Member behaviour towards officers etc. A further idea put forward at the meeting was to explore with the Local Government Ombudsman's Office a possible arrangement whereby a locally appointed independent member was empowered by that Office to act on their behalf on investigating a complaint involving a Member of either the HFRA/Hampshire Police Authority or Hampshire County Council. In response to Members' wishes and comments, the Clerk agreed to take a report on the item to the Corporate Management Team. Also, the Clerk agreed to make enquiries to ascertain the stance being taken by other local authorities in our area. The Clerk reported it would be his intention to circulate in the first instance to Members of the Standards Committee his intended report for CMT so as to obtain any comments and views they may have beforehand. Martin James as independent Chairman of the Standards Committee should be invited to the relevant CMT meeting .

RESOLVED:

That the comments of the Standards Committee on this item be conveyed by the Clerk in a report to a future meeting of the CMT and Martin James as independent Chairman be invited to that meeting.

33 **BRIBERY ACT 2010**

The Committee considered the report of the Clerk (Item 6 in the Minute Book) which summarises the legal framework and provisions of the Bribery Act 2010 and the action being taken in response to it. It was reported that the same report was also being taken to the Governance Committee. Members supported the way forward being proposed in the report.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the implications of the provisions of the Bribery Act 2010 are noted and that the Committee endorse the action being taken to:

- review risk areas and determine what, if any, bribery prevention procedures should be adopted;
- review tendering and contracting arrangements to ensure that these contain anti-corruption provisions which adequately address the provisions of the Act.
- remind members and officers of the provisions of the Code of Conduct on gifts and hospitality; and
- implement any changes necessary to ensure compliance with the Act.

(b) That a further report is brought to the Committee in due course outlining any changes made.