

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
REPORT BY THE MONITORING OFFICER

TO:	COUNCIL		
DATE:	13 OCTOBER 2009	AGENDA ITEM:	
TITLE:	STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 14 JULY 2009		
CHAIR:	JOHN HICKS		
SERVICE:	CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION	WARDS:	BOROUGH-WIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	JOHN PAINTER	TEL:	0118 939 0797 / 2797
JOB TITLE:	HEAD OF CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION	E-MAIL:	<a href="mailto:John.Painter@reading.gov.uk">John.Painter@reading.gov.uk</a>

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 This report has attached the Minutes of the annual meeting of the Council's Standards Committee, held on 14 July 2009. The Council is asked to receive the Minutes.

1.2 You will see from Minute (4) on page 4 that the Chair of the Committee, John Hicks, intended to present the Minutes personally to tonight's Council meeting, and to raise with Council matters of concern identified by the Standards Committee. Unfortunately, Mr Hicks is now unable to attend tonight's meeting, for business reasons. However, he has asked me to convey the following comments to full Council:

- 1) the Committee's general concern about the use being made by some Councillors of personal blog sites and news forums
- 2) that the Council be recommended to adopt the practice of including a standing "Declaration of Interests" agenda item at the beginning of all meetings involving Councillors (including the Standards Committee); and that all Councillors be encouraged to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in relation to specific issues of personal and prejudicial interests and pre-determination
- 3) Mr Hicks's intention to seek a further round of meetings with individual Group Leaders and the Chief Executive

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the Minutes of the Standards Committee be received;

2.2 That the practice of including a standing "Declaration of Interests" agenda item at the beginning of all meetings involving Councillors, be adopted.