

A G E N D A

Standards Committee

Date: **Friday, 14th January, 2005**

Time: **10:00 a.m.**

Place: **The Council Chamber,
Brockington, 35 Hafod Road,
Hereford**

Notes:

For any further information please contact:

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**County of Herefordshire
District Council**

AGENDA

for the Meeting of the Standards Committee

To: Robert Rogers (Independent Member)(Chairman)

Councillors J.W. Edwards and P.E. Harling
David Stevens (Independent Member)
Richard Gething (Parish Council Representative)
John Hardwick (Parish Council Representative)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.

3. CASE SUMMARY

To consider the summary of the case.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

In the opinion of the Proper Officer, the next item will not be, or is likely not to be, open to the public and press at the time it is considered.

RECOMMENDATION:

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12(A) of the Act, as indicated below.

4. REPORT OF AN INVESTIGATION UNDER SECTION 59 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

To consider an Investigation under Section 59 of the Local Government Act 2000 by Steven Kingston, Ethical Standards Officer.

This item discloses information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (other than the Authority).

The public will be readmitted to the meeting for the following item.

5. HEARING

To proceed with the hearing.

(A summary of the outcome is set out in the following report)

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DECISION NOTICE – SHORT WRITTEN DECISION

The details given below represent a short written decision, as made by the Standards Committee. It is a brief summary of the outcome of today’s hearing. A full written decision, providing more detail in respect of the outcome of the hearing, will be issued as soon as practicable.

SBE CASE NUMBER(S)	SBE4483.03, SBE4517.03, SBE4530.03
MEMBER	Councillor Ray Cooper
AUTHORITY	Bromyard and Winslow Town Council
SUMMARY OF ALLEGATION	It is alleged that Councillor Ray Cooper breached the Code of Conduct by: on 22 July 2003 failing to treat the Clerk of the Council with respect; and on 29 July 2003 failing to treat the Clerk, Councillor Pearl Briggs, and the Assistant Clerk with respect.
DATE OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE HEARING	Friday 14 January 2004
STANDARDS COMMITTEE PANEL MEMBERS	Mr Robert Rogers (Independent Member) (Chairman), Councillor John Edwards (Herefordshire Council), Mr Richard Gething (Parish Council Representative), Mr John Hardwick (Parish Council Representative), Councillor Peter Harling (Herefordshire Council), Mr David Stevens (Independent Member)

DECISION

We have carefully considered the evidence and arguments presented before us today. We find that on 22 July 2003 and on 29 July 2003 Councillor Ray Cooper breached paragraph 2(b) of the Council’s Code of Conduct which requires that members should treat others with respect.

We have taken into account the evidence of Councillor Dauncey that Councillor Cooper’s behaviour has improved beyond all recognition, and that both he and Councillor Briggs, the Mayor, have told us that he is now a very good councillor, and we have given weight to the fact that these are the two of the three complainants who are still on the council.

We have also had in mind the very lengthy period of time this matter has been outstanding. But in view of the breach of paragraph 2(b) of the Code we have no alternative but to impose a penalty, which is one of censure.

Our recommendation to Bromyard and Winslow Town Council is that they proceed with the training for councillors mentioned in Councillor Briggs’s evidence this morning. The Herefordshire Association of Local Councils and this Committee are ready to support that process.

We have significant concerns about the length of time this investigation took to be completed, and this and other procedural matters will be covered in our full decision.

Our Decision Notice will be made available today and will be posted on the Herefordshire Council’s website today. Our full decision will be published as soon as possible.

**Brockington
35 Hafod Road, Hereford
Date: 14 January 2005**

