

REPORT TO STANDARDS COMMITTEE

REPORT OF: LUCY YOULES
SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL (DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER)

REPORT NO. DLS56

DATE: 5th DECEMBER 2005

TITLE:	Investigation under S.66 of the Local Government Act 2000 into an allegation concerning Councillor Linda Neal and Councillor Teri Bryant – members of South Kesteven District Council
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	N/A
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	N/A
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	N/A

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	CORPORATE GOVERNANCE
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	N/A
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	N/A
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	The Standards Board for England Guidance for members on lobby groups, dual hatted members and the Code of Conduct. Members Code of Conduct

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 By letter dated the 20th June 2005, the Standards Board for England referred the investigation of an allegation made against Councillor Linda Neal and Councillor Teri Bryant to this Council to be investigated.
- 1.2 Having given advice to the Councillors on matters referred to in the allegation, the Monitoring Officer, Nicholas Goddard, for reasons of conflict of interest, excluded himself from investigation of the allegation. As a result of this, He delegated the investigation to the Solicitor to the Council and Deputy Monitoring Officer (DMO)

2. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 2.1 The DMO has investigated the allegation by reviewing the minutes of the Council meetings referred to in the allegation, considering the relevant sections of the Members Code of Conduct and the Standards Board guidance on lobby groups, dual hated members and the Code of Conduct, interviewing the Monitoring Officer, Councillors Neal and Bryant and e-mail correspondence with the complainant.
- 2.2 A confidential draft report was compiled from the information gathered during the investigation. The draft report was sent to the Councillors, the complainant, the Monitoring Officer and the Standards Board for comment. All comments received have been considered and the final report has been produced. This is attached as a confidential appendix to this report.
- 2.3 The findings of the report are that the Councillors, having established that they were not trustees on the board of the South Kesteven Citizens Advice Bureau and having taken the appropriate advice of the Council's Monitoring Officer, did not breach the Local Code of Conduct for Members.

3. RECOMMENDATION

In view of the finding, it is recommended that the Standards Committee accepts the DMO's report and dismisses the allegation made against Councillors Neal and Bryant.

4. CONTACT OFFICER

**Lucy Youles - Solicitor to the Council
(Deputy Monitoring Officer)**