

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

11 JUNE 2021

Present:

Councillors Bullivant, Connett, Evans, Nuttall, Peart and L Petherick

Apologies:

Councillors

Officers in Attendance:

Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer
Democratic Services Team Leader & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Trainee Democratic Services Officer
Administrative Assistant
Solicitor & Deputy Monitoring Officer

4. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Cllr L Petherick be elected Chair for 2021/22.

5. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED that Cllr Nuttall be elected Vice-Chair for 2021/22.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

7. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 26 February 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

8. NOTICE OF MOTION - STANDARDS COMMITTEE PROCESS CHANGE

Members considered the Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr Eden on the changes to the Standards Committee process and referred to this committee by Executive and generally considered existing arrangements satisfactory.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) No Further Action in response to:

No minutes or decision notice from a Standards Hearing are published on the Council Website until all those present at the committee as members have reviewed them

- (1) No Further Action in response to:

No minutes or decision notice from a Standard hearing should be distributed to any external body until the committee has seen debated and approved the minutes and decision notice

- (2) Minutes to be succinct and reflect the conclusion and decision of Standard Hearing;

Minutes should reflect the conclusion of the Investigation and not be used to repeat and re-frame accusations and allegations that are not proven (by the Investigating Officer) as the finding

- (3) No Further Action in response to:

That this authority investigates the potential for seeking an appeal body to ensure natural justice can be delivered beyond the summary findings delivered currently

- (4) The Monitoring Officer and both Deputy Monitoring Officers continue to consider the suitability of any persons not employed by the Council to conduct investigations appointing Investigating Officers in response to:

All Investigating Officers to be taken through a due diligence process by Audit Scrutiny

- (5) No Further Action in response to:

All Independent Persons to be taken through a due diligence process and their participation within the process reported to and assessed by the Audit Scrutiny committee

- (6) All Members should undertake Equalities Training which may involve officers who in any event will be involved in organising such training in response to:

(as it does for planning and training for committee members) all Standards Committee members to take appropriate training, in this case Unconscious Bias and Equalities training as part of councillor development – to be extended to the Monitoring officer, investigating officer and independent persons as a requirement for participation

- (8) No Further Action in response to:

the Executive will investigate alternative Standards processes with the Senior Leadership Team, to ensure best quality and best value for money

9. FORWARD PLAN

Members discussed the areas of work that they would like the Committee to consider during the municipal year.

RESOLVED that the following items be added to the Standards Committee Forward Plan and / or actions taken:-

- (1) The appointment of the Town and Parish Representative to sit on Standards Sub-Committees considering Town and Parish Cllr complaints with the Chair and Monitoring Officer being authorised to seek and review applications for the Committee's consideration;
- (2) Review of the Member/Officer Protocol;
- (3) Development of a Members' Social Media Guide to link to the new Code of Conduct; and
- (4) Consideration as to how to ensure compliance by Members with sanctions imposed by the Committee for Member breaches of the Code.
- (5) That the Chair be authorised to put in place arrangements for the pending sub-committee hearing on 6 July 2021.

The meeting started at 11.00 am and finished at 11.35 am.

Chair