

# Standards Committee

Friday, 18 March 2022

Present:

Councillors L Petherick (Chair), Nuttall (Vice-Chair), Connett and Peart

Apologies:

Councillors Bullivant and Evans

Officers in Attendance:

Democratic Services Team Leader & Deputy Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer to the Council

## 1 Order of Agenda

The Chair announced that item 6 Notice of Motion from Councillor Eden would be taken before item 5 Members Code of Conduct and Behaviour.

## 2 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 6 July 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

## 3 Declarations of Interest

None.

## 4 Member Complaint Process

Members discussed the complaints process.

**RESOLVED** that the following Member complaints process be approved as follows:-

Step	Procedure
1	The Council will aim to acknowledge receipt of complaints within 5 working days. The Monitoring Officer will consider whether it appears that there has been a breach of the code of conduct. At this stage if the complaint is not to progress further the Monitoring Officer will notify the complainant in writing of that fact.
2	If the complaint amounts to a potential breach of the code the Monitoring Officer will write to the subject member with details of the complaint, including those of the complainant (unless any confidentiality request has been agreed) and seek their views.
3	The subject member of the complaint will provide their written

	comments, with supporting documentation or indicate that they do not wish to provide a written response to the complaint.
4	If the complaint identifies criminal conduct or breach of other regulation by any person, the Monitoring Officer has the power to call in the Police and other regulatory agencies.
5	The Monitoring Officer will consider the complaint again in the context of any written submissions and supporting documentation provided by the subject member and will seek the views of the Independent Person.
6	The Monitoring Officer will review and decide if the complaint can be resolved by way of local resolution. There may be occasions when Group Leaders could be asked to facilitate a local resolution or whether it requires a further formal investigation.
7	Where informal resolution is not possible, the Monitoring Officer will refer the complaint to the Chair of Standards Committee to decide whether a formal investigation is required by an external Independent investigation officer.
8	If formal investigation is required, an Independent investigation officer will be appointed. Both the complainant, the subject member and the Independent Person will receive a draft copy of the investigating officer's report and will have the opportunity to respond to it. The investigating officer will then produce a final report.
9	Once the final report is received the report will be referred to the Standards Committee for consideration and action as appropriate.

## **5 Notice of Motion - Cllr Eden**

Members deferred this item to a future Standards Committee meeting to enable Cllr Eden to be given the opportunity to attend and present the Notice of Motion.

## **6 Member Code of Conduct and Behaviour**

Members discussed the behaviour of members over the previous two years including the lack of meaningful sanctions for those Members to be found to have breached the Members Code of Conduct.

Members asked that a paper be brought to a future meeting to outline what meaningful sanctions the Council could apply for those to be found to have breached the Members Code of Conduct.

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 11.00 am.

Chair