

MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE Thursday, 21 March 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Linda Woollard (Chair), Carol Chisholm (Vice-Chair), Bill Evans and Susan Jones

INDEPENDENT PERSON: David Haley and Barry Parsonage

OFFICERS: Dave Whelan (Legal Services Manager/Interim Monitoring Officer), Dianne Scambler (Governance and Member Services Team Leader) and Coral Astbury (Trainee Governance and Member Services Officer)

PUBLIC: 0

35 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Colin Coulton, Rebecca Noblet and Mick Titherington.

36 Minutes of the Last Meeting

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on the 13 December 2018 were confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

37 Minutes of the Standards Committee Initial Assessment Hearing Panel

Members expressed their disappointment at the delay of audio evidence being submitted to the Interim Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

The minutes of the Standards Committee Initial Assessment Hearing Panel held on the 13 December 2018 were held to be a correct record for signing by the Chair.

38 Declarations of Interest

There was no declarations of interest made.

39 Local Government Ethical Standards

The Interim Monitoring Officer presented a report which sought to inform members of a recent publication by the Committee on Standards in Public Life on the issue of "Local Government Ethical Standards." The report followed on from an extensive consultation exercise on Local Government ethical standards, of which the Standards Committee took part and submitted a response. The report provided a

number of recommendations which would be taken to Central Government for consideration.

Members were directed to a number of recommendations within the report of particular interest. These included areas such as an updated model code of conduct, declaring and managing interests, the tenure of an Independent Person and the level of sanctions available to Standards Committees.

The Committee discussed the report and recommendations and were generally happy with the report findings.

Suggestions from the committee included the inclusion of the Member Officer Protocol and the Social Media Policy on the new Member Induction programme and a possible review of the Members' Code of Conduct to include malicious complaints as a breach of the code.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to write to the relevant Government Office expressing the view that it would like the Government to give active consideration to the recommendations contained in the report on ethical standards by the Committee on Standards in Public Life, particularly with regard to the introduction of an effective sanctions regime.

Chair

Date