

<b>MINUTES OF</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE INITIAL ASSESSMENT HEARING PANEL</b>
<b>MEETING DATE</b>	<b>Thursday, 26 July 2018</b>
<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Councillors Carol Chisholm (Chair), Susan Jones, Michael Titherington and D Haley (Independent Person)
<b>OFFICERS:</b>	Dave Whelan, Interim Monitoring Officer and Darren Cranshaw, Assistant Director – Scrutiny & Democratic Services
<b>OTHER MEMBERS:</b>	0
<b>PUBLIC:</b>	0

#### **9 Apologies for Absence**

None, all present.

#### **10 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

#### **11 Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED: that the press and public be excluded for the following items of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

By virtue of Paragraph 1: Information relating to any individual.

#### **12 Initial Assessment Hearing - Compliant from a Member of the Council**

The Interim Monitoring Officer presented a confidential report updating on two complaints previously considered by the Hearings Panel concerning the leaking of confidential information.

The complaints against Councillor A had been resolved by way of informal resolution as recommended by the Hearings Panel on 21 November 2017.

The complaint against Councillor B had not been resolved as Councillor B had not responded to any correspondence about the complaint. However, Councillor B had now provided a detailed response to the complaint, which had been attached to the agenda.

The Panel carefully considered the complaint with the new information provided by Councillor B against the Council's assessment criteria. The Panel considered the various options available to it.

The Panel felt that it was not in the public interest for the matter to be referred for formal investigation by an investigator. Informal resolution was considered to be the best option and that the Interim Monitoring Officer write to Member B to express concern at the breach in the Council's code of conduct, advise of future conduct and request that the Member undertake training.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously):

That

1. The update provided by the Interim Monitoring Officer concerning Member A be noted; and
2. the complaint against Member B be referred for informal resolution with the Interim Monitoring Officer writing to Member B expressing concern about the breach of the Council's code of conduct, advise on future conduct and request the Member undertake training.

### **13 Initial Assessment Hearing - Complaint from an Officer of the Council**

The Interim Monitoring Officer presented a report about a complaint against Councillor C from an Officer of the Council concerning information shared on social media.

The complaint had previously being considered by the Hearings Panel on 30 August 2017 but had only received a very basic response from Councillor C. Councillor C had now provided a more detailed response to the complaint.

The Panel carefully considered the complaint and response provided by Councillor C against the assessment criteria. The various options available to the panel were also considered.

The Panel felt it was important to recognise the Council's duty of care towards officers and that there should be an informal resolution, if possible. As part of the informal resolution Councillor C should write a letter of apology to the officer concerned. Should an apology not be provided further consideration is to be given to carrying out a formal investigation and referring the complaint to the Standards Committee. A reminder by way of an anonymous example/case study it to be sent to all councillor to emphasise the importance of Members following the code of conduct and Member and Officer Protocol.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That

1. the Interim Monitoring Officer write to Member C requesting that the Member writes a letter of apology to the officer; and
2. all Members of the Council be reminded of the importance of following the code of conduct and Member and Officer protocol.

Chair

Date