

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 13 JULY 2022

Present:

Councillor William Armitage (Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillor Pat Antcliff (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Nigel Barker
Councillor Heather Liggett
Councillor Richard Welton
Pat Coleman – Parish Council Representative
Trevor John Collins - Parish Council Representative

Councillor Pat Kerry
Councillor Diana Ruff

Also Present:

S Sternberg Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer
A Maher Interim Governance Manager
A Bond Governance Officer

STA/ Apologies for Absence

1/22-

23 Apologies for absence were received from the Legal Team Manager and Councillors Rouse and Hancock.

STA/ Declarations of Interest

2/22-

23 There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

STA/ Minutes of Last Meeting

3/22-

23 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the Standards Committee held on 23 March 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

STA/ Review of the Constitution - Part 1

4/22-

23 Members began their annual review of the Constitution. They heard that Officers had taken the opportunity to undertake a 'housekeeping' review of the Constitution that primarily addressed issues such as incorrect titles, references to the incorrect body and various additional minor errors. These alterations were undertaken under the Monitoring Officers Delegated Decisions. Members noted that any serious issues identified would be brought before them for consideration.

The Interim Governance Manager highlighted the location of the Council's Constitution on the NEDDC website so that Members would be able to access and direct others to an updated version of the Constitution.

Members were requested to identify any areas of the Constitution that they

believed should be considered during the review and were reminded that they would be able to recommend areas for review throughout the municipal year.

Committee considered that Questions and Motions at meetings of Council should be considered as part of the review.

Members also considered that the Call-in Protocol for Planning Committee could be considered as part of the annual review but that this would be discussed with the Monitoring Officer first.

RESOLVED – That Members:

1. Considered the proposed programme of review for the Council's Constitution in the corporate year 2022 to 2023.
2. Suggested any additional areas for review that they considered should be included.

STA/ **Standards Committee Annual Report**

**5/22-
23**

The Monitoring Officer presented a report to Committee that outlined the work undertaken by the Standards Committee during the 2021/22 municipal year. This included details on the appointment of Parish/Town Representatives, Local Government Ombudsman Complaints, reports from the Council's Independent Persons and work completed on the Constitution during the municipal year.

Members heard that the report would go to the 12 September 2022 meeting of Council.

RESOLVED – That Members noted the report.

STA/ **Complaints Update**

**6/22-
23**

Committee received an update on the number of complaints that had been received for first quarter of the financial year 2022/23.

It was reported that in the quarter, four complaints had been closed and one remained open. Of the four, three were not found to have breached the Code of Conduct. One complaint was found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct within the areas of dealing with people appropriately and remaining objective. The reasons for this decision were contained within the report.

Members discussed the report and heard that when a Member was asked to deliver an apology as a result of a Complaint being lodged against them, then they would be expected to do so within a reasonable amount of time. If the Member refused to issue an apology than this could have the potential to be a further complaint.

Committee were informed that a revised Code of Conduct that could be adopted for Parish use was currently being developed.

RESOLVED – That the Standards Committee noted the Complaints Update.

STA/ Work Programme 2022/23

7/22-

23

Members discussed the Work Programme and noted that the date of the August meeting would be altered.

RESOLVED – That the Work Programme be noted.

STA/ Urgent Business (public session)

8/22-

23

Members discussed the frequency of meetings in relation to the Code of Conduct and heard that the frequency of meetings and timetable was decided by Members and that there was no requirement under the Code of Conduct to hold a certain number of meetings per year.