

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2015**

PRESENT:- Councillors David Wood (Chair), Michael Bray, Fay Howard, Richard Hurley, Maureen Penny, Eric Shaw and Carol Shelley. Messrs Keith Strickland, Paul Morris, Trevor Davies, David Dawson, Richard Hailstone and Mike Compton.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Vera Tomlinson.

### **9. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded members of the need to declare known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

No declarations of interest were made.

### **10. Minutes**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> July be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **11. Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

### **12. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public**

Resolved - That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the items listed below on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the respective paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph Nos.</u>	<u>Minute No.</u>
8	1 and 2	15

### **13. Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances: Membership**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Law and Democratic Services seeking members' endorsement of the appointment of a representative of the (Higher) Education Sector to serve on the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances. It was noted that, under Article 9 of the Council's Constitution, the Standards Committee was responsible for approving procedures associated with the appointment of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances.

The report also provided members with an update the Committee on the current membership of the Panel.

Resolved – That the membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances, and the appointment of Mr. Angus (Gus) Strang, as a representative of the Education Sector on the Panel, be noted and endorsed.

#### **14. Ethical Framework Update**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Law and Democratic Services providing an update on matters relating to the Ethical Framework, including:

- Dispensations.
- Code of Conduct Complaints.
- The Council's Codes and Protocols.
- The Annual Ethical Audit Self- Assessment.
- Member Training and General Training issues.
- Workshop on the role of the Independent Person.

Resolved – (1) That the Ethical Framework update be noted.

(2) That, in order to facilitate the Standards Committee's consideration of the Council's Codes and Protocols, and in line with the procedure utilised for previous reviews, the Monitoring Officer consult on each of the Codes and Protocols with relevant officers, the political groups on the Council and with Parish Councils, and recommend any valid changes to the Standards Committee at its meeting in January 2016.

(3) That, further to (2) above, members of the Committee be invited to submit to the Monitoring Officer the details of any particular issues that they would wish to be considered as part of the annual review of the codes and protocols.

(4) That members' comments regarding training for members of the Education Transport Appeals Sub-Committee, in relation to legislative changes pending for the 2016/17 Academic Year, be noted.

#### **15. Ethical Compliance Report**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services regarding the outcome of various ethical framework compliance matters, including the details of Whistleblowing cases, breaches of the member/officer relations protocol and Code of Conduct Complaints received since the last Committee and the outcome of any completed investigations in relation to these.

Resolved – (1) That the Ethical Framework Compliance report be noted.

(2) That, in order to promote the whistleblowing policy amongst staff, the Monitoring Officer and the Head of Internal Audit consider the Committee's suggestion that successful outcomes of whistleblowing cases be publicised. That consideration also be given to the issue of anonymous allegations and how it might be communicated to staff that an individual putting his or her name to an allegation can present a much more powerful statement for consideration.

(3) That the Head of Internal Audit be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee to discuss with members the issues raised in (2) above and also the possibility of providing a greater level of information in relation to the individual whistleblowing cases reported to each Standards Committee meeting.

