

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 2 JULY 2018

PRESENT:- Councillor Teresa Page (Chair), Councillors Janine Howarth, Jane Milner-Barry, Stan Pajak, Kevin Parry, Maureen Penny, Caryl Sydney-Smith (Deputy), and Vera Tomlinson and Mr Trevor Davies, Mr Mick Compton and Mr Richard Hailstone.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stephanie Exell and Steve Weisinger, and Mr David Dawson, Mr Paul Morris and Mr Keith Strickland.

1. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Resolved - That Councillor Vera Tomlinson be Vice-Chair of the Standards Committee for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 27th March 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

5. 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 it involves 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>
7	1 and 2	9

6. Standards Committee Annual Report

The Committee was asked to consider its Draft Annual Report for 2017/18 which provided a record of the work of the Standards Committee for the period 1st June 2017 to 31st May 2018.

In response to a question by Councillor Maureen Penny, it was noted that the Council's Members' Code of Conduct was reviewed annually by the Standards Committee before being submitted to the Annual Council meeting to be accepted. It was agreed that, where the Code of Conduct is referenced in the Annual report, the date of the last review of the Code be included.

Members commented on the significant rise in the number of Code of Conduct complaints received in 2017/18. The Director of Law and Democratic Services explained that this was due, almost entirely, to a high number of complaints that had been submitted in respect of the same incident, citing the conduct of several Parish Councillors in the Parish Council's determination of a matter.

Councillor Haworth noted an apparent disparity in the information in Annual Report and the Ethical Update report regarding the period of dispensations granted to members to allow them to speak and vote on the subject matter of Council Tax. The Director of Law and Democratic Services confirmed that the information in the Annual report was correct.

Resolved – (1) That the Draft Standards Committee Annual Report 2016/17, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed.

(2) That the Director of Law and Democratic Services be authorised to finalise the Annual report for publication on the Council's website.

7. Annual Work Programme

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services inviting the Committee to agree its Work Programme for the 2017/2018 Municipal Year.

Resolved – (1) That the Committee's draft Work Programme for 2017/2018, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed.

(2) That it be noted that the proposed work programme was sufficiently flexible to accommodate any unforeseen matters that might arise in relation to the Council's Ethical Framework.

8. 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
- Membership of the Standards Committee – Parish Representatives
- The Independent Persons
- Draft Annual Governance Statement
- Membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel
- Summary of Code of Conduct Complaints
- Member Training
- Register of Interests
- Committee on Standards in Public Life

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

(2) That the draft Annual Governance Statement, attached at Appendix 1 to the

report, be approved to be signed off by the Leader and Chief Executive.

(3) That the appointment of Ms Michelle Howard as a representative of the Voluntary and Community Sector on the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances for a period of four years, ending in July 2022, be endorsed.

9. Ethical Compliance Report

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services regarding the outcome of various ethical compliance matters, including the details of any Whistleblowing cases, breaches of the Member / Officer Protocol, and Code of Conduct complaints received since the last Committee, and the outcome of any completed investigations in relation to these.

Resolved – That the Ethical Compliance report be noted.