

**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 21 JULY 2014**

Review of the Council's Standards Arrangements

The Committee received a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services on the review of the Council's current "Arrangements for dealing with member Code of Conduct Complaints" and inviting the Committee to review the Council's current arrangements, taking into account the discussions at previous meetings and subsequent round tables with a small group of interested residents, and to make any changes it felt would enable complaints to be dealt with more expeditiously in terms of process.

Resolved – (1) That the members of the public and representatives of stakeholder groups who had attended previous meetings of the Standards Committee, and the subsequent round tables, be thanked for their interest and for their constructive and helpful comments on the Council's existing standards arrangements.

(2) That it be noted that the reference in the covering report to "local residents" consulted as part of the review process, included two individuals who attended as representatives of Chiseldon Parish Council.

(3) That, with reference to the summary of the main issues identified at the two round tables (appended to the report), the following be agreed:

- The initial assessment of complaints continue to be determined by a Panel of councillors with an Independent Person and Lay/Parish Representatives in attendance to give their views where appropriate.
- Assessment Panel meetings continue to be convened on an ad hoc basis
- Proceedings at the initial stage of the complaint continue to remain private and confidential and that this issue be further considered as part of the Standards Committee's annual review of the process in March 2015.
- Assessment Panel meetings continue to be held in the absence of the complainant and the respondent but both to be advised at the earliest practicable opportunity of the date when the Assessment Panel will meet to consider the complaint.
- A summary of Code of Conduct complaints received during the Municipal Year be made to each future meeting of the Standards Committee as part of the ethical framework update.
- That the current practice of no appeal from Assessment Panel decisions other than by way of judicial review be continued and that this issue be further considered as part of the scheduled review of the process in March 2015.
- Members be encouraged to continue to make themselves available to attend Assessment Panel meetings so as to enable so far as practicable the completion of the initial assessment of a complaint within a period of one calendar month from receipt of the complaint.

(4) That, with regard to the suggestion that the membership of the Standards Committee should be increased to facilitate a greater pool of members that can be

drawn upon for Assessment Panel meetings, to assist in avoiding any untoward delay in this initial phase of the process, it be noted that the membership of the Standards Committee was increased at the Annual Council Meeting in June 2014 from 6 to 9 councillors.

(5) That the Council document "Arrangements for dealing with Member Code of Conduct complaints", be amended to incorporate the textual changes agreed by the Committee (as set out in the tracked change document at Appendix 1 to these minutes).