

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

6.00 P.M.

25TH APRIL 2013

PRESENT:- Councillors Roger Sherlock (Chairman), Roger Dennison (substitute for Joyce Taylor), Billy Hill, Roger Mace (Vice-Chairman) and David Whitaker

Apologies for Absence

Councillors Sheila Denwood and Joyce Taylor

Officers in attendance:-

Sarah Taylor

Monitoring Officer / Head of Governance

Peter Baines

Senior Democratic Support Officer

76 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct record.

77 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There were no items of urgent business.

78 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

79 PRESS PROTOCOL

The Head of Governance introduced a report about the draft Press Protocol, further to discussion at the previous meeting.

In the course of debate, the committee agreed that the final sentence of paragraph seven should be amended to read 'Where a complaint is resolved after investigation, the committee will consider, as part of its deliberations, whether and when a press statement should be made by the committee'.

Resolved:

That the amended Press Protocol be approved, subject to paragraph seven being amended to read 'Where a complaint is resolved after investigation, the committee will consider, as part of its deliberations, whether and when a press statement should be made by the committee'.

80 AMENDMENT OF THE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SEVEN GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

The Head of Governance introduced a report on changes made to the description of the seven general principles of conduct by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

In its fourteenth report, published in January 2013, the Committee concluded that whilst there was little merit in changing the principles themselves, there was something to be

gained from changing the description of the principles. It was felt that since the principles had been established, understanding of the meaning of certain words had developed.

Resolved:

That Council be recommended to amend the preamble to the Members' Code of Conduct, in part 7, section 2 of the constitution, to incorporate the amendments made to the descriptions of the seven general principles of conduct by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

81 REVIEW OF THE PROTOCOL OF MEMBER/OFFICER RELATIONS

The committee considered a review of the Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which had been referred from the Council Business Committee.

Council Business Committee had been keen to ensure that the protocol was made clearer on the subject of how members could request that information provided to them by officers was also provided to other political groups. The Monitoring Officer had revised the document in line with Council Business Committee's request, and the amended document was appended for members' consideration.

Resolved:

That the revised Protocol on Member / Officer Relations be approved, and recommended to Council Business Committee for inclusion in the constitution.

82 OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY ON PERSONAL INTERESTS: A GUIDE FOR COUNCILLORS

The Head of Governance advised the committee about some revised guidance on interests, which had been issued by the government.

The guidance had been designed to help councillors and parish councillors in light of new standards arrangements introduced by the Localism Act 2011, and it was noted that the Head of Governance intended to circulate it to all city councillors and parish councils in the district.

Resolved:

That the revised guidance on interests be noted and circulated to all members and parish councils. The Head of Governance was also asked to remind parish council clerks to publish their register of members' interests online, in cases where a parish council had its own website.

83 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in

Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

84 SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS

The committee considered a report about code of conduct complaints received since the last meeting.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 18:30)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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