

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

6.10 P.M.

24TH APRIL 2014

PRESENT: Councillors Roger Mace (Chairman), Roger Sherlock (Vice-Chairman), Paul Gardner, Joyce Taylor and David Whitaker

Apologies for Absence
Councillors Billy Hill

Officers in attendance

Sarah Taylor

Peter Baines

Chief Officer (Governance)

Senior Democratic Support Officer

23 MINUTES

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

24 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There were no items of urgent business.

25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26 REVIEW OF THE PROTOCOL ON PLANNING PROCEDURE

The Chief Officer (Governance) introduced a report on proposed amendments to the Protocol on Planning Procedure. If approved, the proposed amendments would need to be recommended to Council Business Committee for inclusion in the constitution.

In the course of discussion, members agreed that it would be helpful to raise the protocol's profile with the general public, in order to make people more aware of a councillor's role in determining planning applications. As such, it was agreed to include a reminder in the introduction that the protocol was a public document, available on the council's website, which councillors could share with members of the public.

Resolved:

To recommend the amended protocol to Council Business Committee for inclusion in the constitution, subject to the inclusion of a reminder in the introduction that the protocol was a public document, available on the council's website, which councillors could share with members of the public.

27 COMPLAINT 3/13 - UPDATE

The Chief Officer (Governance) gave an update on Complaint 3/13, and it was reported that Carnforth Town Council had censured Councillor Dent at its meeting of 19th February.

This was in accordance with a recommendation from this committee, which found that

Councillor Dent had failed to comply with paragraphs 3(1), 3(2)(b), 3(2)(c), and 5 of Carnforth Town Council's code of conduct.

Resolved:

That the update be noted.

28 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.

29 SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS

The Chief Officer (Governance) gave a summary of current code of conduct complaints against councillors.

During the course of discussion, Councillor Mace asked whether the process of bringing a complaint to the hearing stage could be accelerated for the benefit of the person under investigation, and requested that his question be recorded in the minutes. In response, the Chief Officer (Governance) reported that code of conduct complaints were given a high level of priority by officers, although time and resource pressures could impede progress during busy periods, and witness availability and delays in returning paperwork were sometimes a problem in setting hearing dates.

Resolved:

That the summary of complaints be noted.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6:30pm)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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