

STANDARDS COMMITTEE
Wednesday 7th December 2016.

PRESENT – Councillor McGurk, (in the Chair), Gunn, Khan, Z, Lee, P. Fletcher and T. Hussain

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE- David Fairclough, Stewart Wright and Paul Conlon.

RESOLUTIONS

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and especially Mr Stewart Wright the new Independent Officer to the Committee; apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Slater and Brookfield.

2. Councillor Michael Johnson

The Chair drew attention to the recent sad death of Councillor Michael Johnson, Chair of the Committee. The Committee stood for a minute in silence in respect of the memory of Mike.

2 Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on 6th July 2016

RESOLVED - That approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2016 be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Membership of the Committee.

The Committee were informed that the following the resignation of one of the parish council representatives a vacancy on the Committee existed and a nomination had now been received.

Resolved –

1. That Councillor John Malowana-Murphy be appointed to the Committee as the second Parish Council representative.

5. Members Training Update.

The Committee received a report updating Members on the 2016/17 Member Training Programme. The Committee were reminded that they had a role in monitoring the training of Members in order to ensure that the highest standards could be maintained by Councillors/Members.

The Committee received a presentation and over view of the online training portal and how this would influence the future delivery of training throughout the Council to both officers and members. Attention was drawn to the fact that whilst the training portal and e learning would meet many of the needs of the Council there was still a need for some training delivered face to face to ensure that the person being trained fully understood the message being delivered. Members drew attention to the need for certain training that was so important for Members that it should be mandatory and delivered in a similar way to that delivered to Members wishing to serve on quasi-judicial Committees. Members discussed the ways that this could be monitored and sanctions that could be imposed if someone did not undertake this training. The Monitoring Officer undertook to report to the next meeting on the issues discussed by Members.

- Resolved-**
1. That the update on the Members Training Programme be noted,
 2. That the Monitoring Officer be requested to draw up a list of training events for consideration by the Committee that could be designated as mandatory for Members attendance.
 3. That a register of member's attendance be compiled for the Committees information.

6. Complaints Update.

The Committee were updated on the complaints received regarding Members conduct under the arrangements for dealing with complaints about the Code of Conduct for Members.

The Committee had a role in considering any complaints received relating to the conduct of Members of the Borough Council, co-opted Members and Parish Councils in its area. Members were reminded that not all complaints are proceeded with for various reasons (unsubstantiated complaints, vexatious complaints etc.) however it was important that members were aware of receipt of these and legitimate complaints that are being processed and progressed.

Members of the Committee were kept up to date on receipt of all complaints and progress at meetings of the Standards Committee where appropriate subject to any relevant provisions relating to confidentiality.

At the meeting in July 2016 the summary of alleged complaints since January 2014 had been considered but one complaint was in progress at the time and an update would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee

There have now been seven further matters subject to the Complaints process. Three remain currently in Procedure and an update on progress will be made at the next meeting of the Committee.

Four case matters, similar in nature, were investigated by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with the Procedure. Following consultation with the Independent

Person, and acknowledgements from the Members as regards the inappropriateness of their actions, along with a commitment to undertake training to support future misunderstanding, no further action was deemed warranted on this occasion.

Resolved- That the Committee note the report and that the Monitoring Officer continues to keep Members updated on the complaints received and progress in dealing with these.

9. Council Constitution Update.

The Committee received a report of the Monitoring Officer updating Members on the updates to the constitution that had recently been made and roles and responsibilities of Members and officers.

Resolved- That the report be noted.

12 Dates for meetings of the Standards Committee

Members discussed rearranging the meeting of the Committee scheduled to take place in January due to the proximity of this rearranged meeting.

Resolved- That the Committee meet on the following dates in the municipal year 2016/17

8th February and 16th March 2017.

Signed.....

Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were signed

Date.....