

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2 April 2014 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Pratt (Chairman); Councillors Mrs Bunker, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Mrs Higgins, Mrs Knight, Mrs Syson, Wilkinson and Williams.

Parish and Town Council representatives: Councillors Cooke, Mrs Gordon, Owen and Smart.

ALSO PRESENT:

Independent Persons: Mr R Meacham and Mr Tomkinson.

Officers: Mr G Leach (Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Brookes and Councillor Mrs Falp.

19. **SUBSTITUTES**

There were no substitutes.

20. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Minute 22 – Update on the sanctions imposed on Councillor Mrs Bromley

Councillor Mrs Higgins declared that she was a friend of Councillor Mrs Bromley and that they had worked together.

21. **STANDARD COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the Standards Committee of 18 February 2014³ were taken as read and signed as correct record by the Chairman.

(Councillor Mrs Gordon dissented from approving the minutes)

22. **UPDATE ON THE SANCTIONS IMPOSED ON COUNCILLOR MRS BROMLEY**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer highlighted the response to the Standards Committee from Councillor MacKay and the suggested options available to the Committee. He explained that the Committee were not there to reconsider the case but were simply deciding how to respond to the documents from Councillor MacKay.

It was proposed, by Councillor Cooke and duly seconded, that the matter be referred to Council for them to confirm the sanction for Councillor Mrs Bromley to apologise to Miss Turpin. On being put to the vote the proposal was lost.

It was proposed, by Councillor Cooke and duly seconded, that

STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

- (1) Council provides guidance to this committee on what action it should take given the Committee have tried all avenues open to it and have been unable to enforce the sanctions; and
- (2) Ask Council if they will write to Miss Turpin or if they would like the Committee to write to Miss Turpin explaining the position the Council finds itself in and apologising for this.

On being put to the vote the proposal was lost.

It was proposed, by Councillor Mrs Higgins and duly seconded, that the Chairman of the Committee writes to Miss Turpin with words along the following lines, which would be circulated to the Committee for comments prior to dispatch:

"There was a Hearing regarding your complaint in which Councillor Mrs Bromley was sanctioned by the District Council's Standards Committee. I am now writing on behalf of the Committee to make a full apology to you for Councillor Mrs Bromley's behaviour. Regrettably the Committee has limited power to enforce these sanctions due to legislation and can go no further."

On being put to the vote it was

Resolved that the Chairman of the Committee writes to Miss Turpin with words along the following lines, which would be circulated to the Committee for comments, prior to dispatch:

"There was a Hearing regarding your complaint in which Councillor Mrs Bromley was sanctioned by the District Council's Standards Committee.

I am now writing on behalf of the Committee to make a full apology to you for Councillor Mrs Bromley's behaviour.

Regrettably the Committee has limited power to enforce these sanctions due to legislation and can go no further."

23. REGISTER OF COMPLAINTS

The Committee received the current register of Code of Conduct complaints.

Members of the Committee expressed concerns over the value of the Committee in relation to the cost of cases and the ability to enforce sanctions that had been issued.

The Committee were informed that the review of the Code of Conduct was ongoing but work on this was restricted due to demands on officer time for other projects.

Resolved that the log of complaints be noted.

(The meeting ended at 7.07 pm)