

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18 February 2014 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors Mrs Bunker, De-Lara-Bond, Gifford, Mrs Higgins, Mrs Knight, Pratt, 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 A Jones (Monitoring Officer) and Mr G Leach (Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer)

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

14. SUBSTITUTES

There were no substitutes.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Smart informed the meeting that one of the complaints on the complaints log related to the Town Council he was a member of.

16. STANDARD COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the Standards Committee of 10 October 2013 were taken as read, and subject to the inclusion of Councillor Cooke on the Code of Conduct working party, were signed as correct record by the Chairman.

The minutes of the Standards Committee of 30 January 2014 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the inclusion of the following:

- An additional paragraph stating that "Ms Pollard, advised the Committee, in response to a question, that there was no requirement for a Councillor to sign the Code of Conduct";
- An additional paragraph stating that "The Committee Services Officer, at the request of the Chairman, circulated the list of sanctions available, as set out within the current procedures of the Council for handling complaints about Councillors."; and
- The following paragraph be amended to include the text in italics "It was, therefore, proposed and duly seconded that, *in line with sanctions contained within the procedures*, of the Council the Independent Group Leader be asked [.....].

STANDARDS COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

17. HEARING PANEL MINUTES

The minutes of the Hearing Panel of 15 November 2013 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

18. REGISTER OF COMPLAINTS

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

The Committee discussed and agreed that the complaints log should include reference to whether the complaint had originated from a Councillor, a member of the public or an officer of the Council.

The Committee were also informed that they should all now receive alerts advising when Hearing Panels had been set up and agendas published. They would also now be informed when the complaints log was updated on the Council's website.

Councillor Pratt provided the Committee with an update on the budget for Code of Conduct investigations during the current financial year.

Councillor Pratt informed the Committee about the level of responses received to the consultation on the current Code of Conduct and associated documents. He also highlighted that the working party would be meeting to discuss the feedback from the consultation on 19 February 2014.

Councillor Williams informed the Committee that he had spoken with Councillor MacKay, regarding the Committee's decision to request the Group Leader to remove Councillor Mrs Bromley from Committees for six months. Councillor MacKay had informed him that he was waiting for the minutes to be confirmed before taking action.

(The meeting ended at 6.48 pm)