

Standards Committee – 29 March 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the **Standards Committee** held on **29 March 2022** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr Mrs J E McPherson
Vice-Chairman: Cllr R R Dray

Cllr Mrs T L Carter
Cllr D S Efd
Cllr J N Gooding

Cllr G W Myers
Cllr M G Wilkinson

INDEPENDENT PERSONS (INVITEES NON-VOTING)

Mr P Scott
Vacancy

PARISH MEMBERS (CO-OPTED NON-VOTING)

Cllr Mrs M Cohen
Cllr Mrs D A Constable
Cllr Miss A Marriott

VISITING MEMBER

Cllr A L Williams.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs J R Lumley and Mr S Shadbolt.

OFFICERS PRESENT

A Law	- Assistant Director, Legal and Democratic
L Moss	- Assistant Director, People and Communities
W Szyszka	- Democratic Services Officer

68 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

69 LOCAL INVESTIGATIONS AND DETERMINATIONS – APRIL 2021 TO SPETEMBER 2021 AND OCTOBER 2021 TO MARCH 2022

Members received the report of the Monitoring Officer with a summary of complaints and queries received in relation to Members' behaviour under the Code of Conduct.

In response to a Member query regarding the complaints received and whether Members needed further training, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that

complaints received were received from members of the public and not exclusively from Members internally.

Members of the Committee requested that a column be added that specified which complaints were received by Councillors or members of the public. The Monitoring Officer agreed to this going forward.

A Member expressed that within the Members' Code of Conduct, there was no specification on Member activity on social media; however, a policy was available to guide Members in respect of their activity on social media. The Monitoring Officer responded that a copy of the guidance would be provided to Members. The policy was designed to assist Members with social media. Within the report, some complaints were received regarding social media; however, no breaches of code were found.

A Member queried whether more information would be made available to Members within the summary of complaints report to understand how final decisions were made. The Monitoring Officer responded that there could be some further details added but if the complaint did not warrant further action, then care would be given to additional details so the subject of complaint and complainant were not identified.

A Member queried whether there was an appeals panel, and it was confirmed that there is no appeal to the decision of the Monitoring Officer.

Resolved

That the summary of complaints and determinations for the period April 2021 to March 2022 be received.

70 SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Members considered the report of the Assistant Director, People and Communities seeking whether it should be mandatory for all councillors to undertake "Level 1" safeguarding training.

Officers clarified that although not be a legal requirement for Councillors to attend Level 1 safeguarding training; however, if voted to make mandatory by the Committee, attendance would be influenced through group leaders.

A Member queried whether Parish Members would be offered Level 1 safeguarding training and whether there was any cost associated to this. Officers clarified that there was no cost and Parish Members would be offered the same training at the same time as Councillors.

Members expressed that they would like to see an opportunity for Members to also undergo level 2 safeguarding training. Officers advised that the Essex Safeguarding Adult boards, offered the opportunity for all to attend ongoing free training and this link would be circulated

Resolved

It is proposed that the Committee recommends that Level 1 safeguarding training is made mandatory for all elected members.

(This was unanimously agreed.)

The meeting closed at 7.44 pm.

Chairman

Date

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