

Standards Committee – 23 June 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the **Standards Committee** held on **23 June 2015** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr D Merrick
Vice-Chairman: Cllr R R Dray

Cllr J C Burton	Cllr M J Steptoe
Cllr Mrs L A Butcher	Cllr Mrs C A Weston
Cllr G J Ioannou	

INDEPENDENT PERSONS (INVITEES NON-VOTING)

Mr M G Drage
Mr S Shadbolt
Mrs L Walker

PARISH MEMBERS (CO-OPTED NON-VOTING)

Cllr P Beckers
Cllr Mrs D Constable

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs C M Mason and Mrs L A Vingoe.

OFFICERS PRESENT

A Law	-	Assistant Director, Legal Services
M Power	-	Committee Administrator

128 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 April 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

129 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were received in respect of the Parish/Town Council Training Agenda item: Cllr R R Dray by virtue of being a Member of Rayleigh Town Council and the District Council representative on the Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils; Cllr J C Burton by virtue of being a Member of Rayleigh Town Council; Cllr M J Steptoe by virtue of being a Member of Barling Parish Council; Cllr G J Ioannou by virtue of being a Member of Stambridge Parish Council and a representative on the Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils and Cllr P A Beckers by virtue of being a representative on the Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils.

130 LOCAL INVESTIGATIONS AND DETERMINATIONS – ANNUAL SUMMARY 2014/15

The Committee received the annual summary of local investigations and determinations dealt with between April 2014 and March 2015.

During discussion, the following was noted:-

- It is understood that the District Council policy on audio recording at Council meetings has been adopted by some of the District's Parish Councils.
- Standards/Code of Conduct training is scheduled to take place in July; Members would be asked in advance of the training if they have any issues they would like to raise or any questions they would like answered at the training.
- Each complaint that is received is reviewed by the Monitoring Officer.

Resolved that the annual summary of local investigations and determinations for the 2014/15 Municipal Year be received.

131 PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL TRAINING

The Committee received a report from the Assistant Director, Democratic Services relating to Parish/Town Council training.

Members expressed concern at the low number of attendees from Parish/Town Councils at both the free and chargeable District Council training sessions and discussed how Parish/Town Councils could be encouraged to participate in more of the training sessions. The issue was raised frequently at meetings of the Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils (RHALC). Even though most Parish/Town Councils have training budgets, many have not attended the planning training sessions that have been designed specifically for them. It was suggested that Parish/Town Councils be asked why they are not more engaged with District Council training; this could be raised at the forthcoming Parish Summit and with the RHALC.

A motion was moved by Cllr M J Steptoe and seconded by Cllr Mrs C A Weston that one place on each of the District Council planning training courses be offered free of charge to each of the Parish/Town Councils.

During discussion it was noted that many District Councillors are also Parish/Town Councillors, which may reduce the number of training places that will be taken up by Parish Councils. The representative attending the training would be able to report back on the training to their Parish/Town Council.

It was appreciated that priority at planning training sessions should be given to District Councillors but that the layout of seating in the training room could be rearranged to accommodate a higher number of attendees.

It was noted that the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) provides training courses specifically for Parish/Town Councils.

The motion was carried by a show of hands and it was:-

Recommended to Council

That one place to be offered to each of the Parish/Town Councils free of charge to each of the District Council planning training courses.

It was further:-

Resolved

That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.24 pm.

Chairman

Date

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