

## Standards Committee – 27 June 2017

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Standards Committee** held on **27 June 2017** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr Mrs C A Weston

Cllr D S Efte

### **INDEPENDENT PERSONS (INVITEES NON-VOTING)**

Mr P Scott  
Mrs L Walker

### **PARISH MEMBERS (CO-OPTED NON-VOTING)**

Cllr P A Beckers  
Cllr Mrs D A Constable  
Cllr Mrs M Weir

### **VISITING MEMBERS**

Cllrs M Hoy and M J Steptoe

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R R Dray, J D Griffin, Mrs J R Lumley, Mrs C M Mason and Mr S Shadbolt.

### **SUBSTITUTES**

Cllr Mrs D Hoy	-	For Cllr Mrs C M Mason
Cllr Mrs J R Gooding	-	For Cllr J D Griffin
Cllr Mrs L Shaw	-	For Cllr R R Dray
Cllr A L Williams	-	For Cllr Mrs J R Lumley

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

J Bostock	-	Assistant Director, Democratic Services
A Law	-	Assistant Director, Legal Services
M Power	-	Democratic Services Officer

### **130 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 131 LOCAL INVESTIGATIONS AND DETERMINATIONS – ANNUAL SUMMARY 2016/17

Members received the annual summary of local investigations and determinations dealt with between April 2016 and March 2017.

#### **Resolved**

That the annual summary of local investigations and determinations for the 2016/17 Municipal Year be noted.

### 132 MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Members considered the report from the Assistant Director, Democratic Services relating to Member Learning and Development.

During discussion the following was noted:

- There was insufficient officer resource to offer additional bespoke planning training courses for Parish/Town Councils across the District.
- Some of the smaller Parish Councils had advised that the charge of £40 per attendee at District Council Member training sessions after the first space (for which no charge was made) was a deterrent to attendance.
- The issue of distance of travel for some of the Parish Councils to the Council offices in Rayleigh may contribute to the low attendance at District Council Member training.
- The Essex Association of Local Councils offers training courses at a cost, which are designed specifically for Parish/Town Councils, and could deliver courses at locations locally.
- Essex County Highways could be requested to provide a course on the Local Highways Panel as part of next year's training programme; Parish/Town Councils would be invited to attend.
- Code of Conduct/Standards training is offered completely free of charge to Parish/Town Councils due to the fact that the District Council's Code of Conduct is adopted by all Parish/Town Councils in the District. In 2017/18 three separate sessions of Standards/Code of Conduct training had been arranged by the District Council to provide increased opportunity for both District and Parish/Town Councils to attend.
- There could be an issue with only one free space being permitted for the bespoke planning training courses for Parish/Town Councils as

planning matters may be technically difficult to disseminate to other Councillors.

- A request that the topics of material planning considerations, permitted development and building in the green belt be included in the annual planning training for Parish/Town Councils would be fed back to the Assistant Director, Planning and Regeneration Services.
- The primary purpose of the District Council Member training programme was to provide training for District Councillors.
- Information on which of the Parish/Town Councils had attended training during past years was available.
- The District Council as the local planning authority had a different role to that of Parish/Town Councils; therefore, it was not appropriate for Parish/Town Councils to attend District Council planning training.
- Parish/Town Councils could benefit from attendance at District Council Development Committee meetings as a way of gaining knowledge of planning matters.
- An approach could be made to the Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils to stress the importance of a representative from each Parish/Town Council attending bespoke Parish/Town Council planning training.
- Although the role played by Parish/Town Councils in the planning system as a consultee was recognised, it is not within the remit of the District Council to provide additional planning training for Parish Councils.
- The options for e-learning and DVDs for planning training would be explored with planning officers.
- The option of holding the forthcoming Parish/Town Council planning course in a venue in the east of District would be explored. The cost of using venues in the east of the District for Parish training courses would be provided.
- The background to the introduction of the £40 cost to Parish/Town Councils would be provided.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That a report on the availability of on-line/DVD training be made to the next meeting of the Committee.

- (2) That the option of holding the forthcoming Parish/Town Council planning course in a venue in the east of the District be explored.
- (3) That the background to the introduction of the £40 cost to Parish/Town Councils be provided.
- (4) That an approach be made to the Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils to stress the importance of a representative from each Parish/Town Council attending bespoke Parish/Town Council planning training.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

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