

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Standards Committee held in the Coltman VC Room at the Town Hall, Burton upon Trent on Tuesday 6th December 2016.

Present:

Councillors M J Bowering (Chairman), R J Clarke, M T Fitzpatrick, Mrs J Jones and Mrs J Killoran.

Parish Council Member:

Councillor P Cooper.

Officers Present:

The Monitoring Officer and the Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present:

Mr G Goodall (Independent Person) and Mrs R Melbourne (Reserve Independent Person).

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs A Johnson and Mrs J Parkin (Independent Members) and Mr C Keen (Parish Council Member).

36/16 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at the commencement of the meeting.

37/16 MINUTES

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th September 2016 be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

38/16 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business pursuant to Rule 12.

39/16 HEARING OF COMPLAINT REGARDING A MEMBER'S CONDUCT

(MO) This was to be a hearing of complaint regarding Member conduct.

The Monitoring Officer explained that although the meeting had originally been convened to hear a complaint regarding a Member's conduct, Councillor Milner had emailed a full apology for the words he used to describe residents of 7 and 9 Tintagel Close. She reported that although this apology was late in the proceedings she had decided, in consultation with the Independent Person, Mr Graham Goodall, that she should accept Councillor Milner's apology

as a Summary Resolution of the complaints, as set out in Section 7 of the Council's Standards Procedure.

In their complaints forms both Mr Blower and Mr Purslow had requested a public apology and this had been taken into account by the Monitoring Officer and the Independent Person. The Monitoring Officer commented that by reporting Councillor Milner's apology to the Standards Committee, she was placing it on the public record.

Noted:

That Councillor Milner's apology, set out below would be accepted as conclusion of the matter.

"With regards to the Standards complaints against me – I understand that the use of the word 'stole' has caused offence to the complainants of 7 & 9 Tintagel close. That was never my intention, and for that I apologise.

The word 'stole' is an emotive one which did not capture what I was truly trying to express. In my eyes, what I was trying to articulate, was that in my opinion, land had been taken before there was any entitlement to do so by following due process".

40/16 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved:

That, in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting during discussion of the following items it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets before each item number on the Agenda:

MONITORING OFFICERS UPDATE REPORT

41/16 **MONITORING OFFICER'S UPDATE REPORT**

(MO) Councillors received an oral update on local and national issues relating to ethical standards and any complaints or other problems within East Staffordshire from the Monitoring Officer.

The Monitoring Officer informed Members that she was currently dealing with 4 complaints, two against Borough Councillors and 2 complaint against parish councillors.

She reported that one of the complaints against a Borough Councillor had been dealt with and had been withdrawn; and she was awaiting the report from the investigating officer regarding the other Borough Councillor complaint.

She informed Members that she was awaiting the report for one of the parish council complaints, whilst the other complaint had been investigated by the Police, and the file had been forwarded to the CPS for their consideration.

An opportunity for questions followed.

NOTED