

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Standards Committee held the Coltman VC Room, Town Hall on Monday 6th March 2023.

Present:

Councillors Mrs J Killoran (Chairman), D F Fletcher, D Florence-Jukes (substitute for Councillor R Grosvenor) D Goodfellow and R Lock.

Officers Present:

Mr John Teasdale (Monitoring Officer) and Mrs M Henchcliffe (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

Also Present:

Mr G Goodall (Independent Member).

An apology for absence was received from Ms A Treney (Parish Councillor).

69/23 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

70/23 MINUTES

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th November 2022 be approved and signed as a correct record, with an amendment to Minute No. 62/22 to read:

“The Monitoring Officer reported that there was a police investigation complaint which had not been concluded by way of an apology. The apology had not been accepted but the standards element would not progress away from that investigation”.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

| Those voting for the motion | Those voting against | Those abstaining |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Councillor D Goodfellow | | Councillor D Florence-Jukes |
| Councillor D F Fletcher | | |
| Councillor Mrs J A Killoran | | |
| Councillor R Lock | | |

71/23 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business pursuant to Rule 12.

72/23 **MONITORING OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT**

(MO) Members considered the report of the Monitoring Officer on the annual review of the arrangements for the discharge of the Monitoring Officer's duties and proposals for amendments.

The Monitoring Officer informed Members that since the last annual report the Council had been required to give formal advice and had undertaken relevant enquiries into allegations of misconduct.

Since his appointment, the Monitoring Officer had given advice to a number of Councillor about their obligations under the Code of conduct; and had given advice and support to a number of Parish Clerks.

Eight complaints were inherited by the Monitoring Officer following his appointment. These complaints had been concluded, however, one of these matters remain outstanding but for full compliance with the Monitoring Officer's Decision Notice.

He reported that he had received 26 Standards complaints, composing as follows:

- 10 complaints were from Parish Councillors, and 16 were from Borough Councillors complaints.
- The 16 Borough Councillors complaints related to 7 different Members.
- Of those 26 complaints, 9 were submitted by members of the public; and
- 7 of the 26 complaints are currently live.

He reported that the Localism Act 2011 requires the Council (and Parish/Town Councils for which it is responsible) to adopt a Code of Conduct for Councillors. All relevant Council's had adopted the Codes of Conduct.

The Monitoring Officer also reported that all Members of the Borough Council had completed their declaration of interest forms, and so had all Parish/Town Councillors. They are required to update their declarations at least annually, even if no changes are required. He reported that he had received updated declarations and personal information since his appointment, which suggested that there was a high level of awareness among Councillors of the need to notify any changes as they occur.

NOTED

73/23 **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 the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets before each item number on the Agenda:

PRIVATE MINUTES

MONITORING OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT

Chairman