

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

HELD: 20 SEPTEMBER 2016

Start: 5.00pm

Finish: 5.30pm

PRESENT:

Councillor: I Moran (Chairman)

Councillors: S Bailey D Westley
J Davis K Wright
J Gordon

In attendance: Mr S Ibbs (Independent Person)
Mr S Garvey (Reserve Independent Person)

Officers: Borough Solicitor (Mr T Broderick)
Legal and Member Services Manager (Mr M Jones)
Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

23 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence. An apology for late arrival from Cllr Davis was noted.

24 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, as related to Standards Committee substitutions, Members noted the termination of membership of Councillor Mrs Marshall and the appointment of Councillor Gordon, for this meeting only, thereby giving effect to the wishes of the Political Groups.

25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26 URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

27 PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no items under this heading.

28 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Standards Committee held on 29 March 2016 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29 ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR THE PROVIDERS OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Solicitor as contained on pages 17 to 21 of the Book of Reports which provided information through a report of the Committee for Standards in Public Life (CSPL) on ethical standards for providers of public services, with particular regard as to whether any of the assurance mechanisms it described should be adopted by the Council.

Actions to be undertaken by the Borough Solicitor under delegated arrangements, as detailed in paragraph 6.2 of the report, were highlighted.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

30 DISPENSATIONS

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Solicitor as contained on pages 23 to 28 of the Book of Reports which sought approval to grant dispensations to Councillors in relation to interests that relate to the functions of the authority. It also sought delegate authority to grant urgent applications for the dispensations to the Borough Solicitor.

RESOLVED: A That a dispensation be granted, until September 2020, to all Councillors who have disclosable pecuniary or pecuniary interests in relation to relevant lines in the budget to allow them to participate and vote in the budget debate.

B That a dispensation in the following terms be granted until September 2020 to all members and co-opted members of the Borough Council and all members of the Parish Councils in West Lancashire (insofar as it is applicable and within the Committee's powers):

"Subject to you disclosing the interest at the meeting, you may attend a meeting and vote on a matter where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest that relates to the functions of the council in respect of:-

- (i) housing where you are a tenant of your authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease.
- (ii) school meals, or school transport and travelling expenses where you are parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, and its does not relate particularly to the school which the child attends.
- (iii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or entitled to the receipt of, such pay.
- (iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members.
- (v) any ceremonial honour given to members; and
- (vi) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992."

- C That delegated authority be given to the Borough Solicitor, in consultation with the Leader and Leader of the Opposition, to grant dispensations, in cases of urgency.

(Note: Councillor Davis arrived at the start of this item.)

31 ANNUAL MONITORING OF TRAINING 2015/16

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Solicitor as contained on pages 29 to 33 of the Book of Reports which detailed training undertaken in 2015/16 and its effectiveness in relation to the Code of Conduct and standards.

Members discussed the effectiveness of the training, the annual training session that had taken place on 12 July 2016 at the Council offices in Ormskirk and the proposals to refresh and re-enliven the Code of Conduct session for 2017.

It was noted that a Training Pack had been issued to all Standards Committee Members, Borough Councillors, Parish Clerks and Parish Councillors in the Borough which included a copy of the Members' Code of Conduct and a set of notes and case studies with model answers.

RESOLVED: That the training undertaken and the evaluation of it be noted.

32 STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Solicitor that provided details of the work undertaken by the Committee during 2015/16.

RESOLVED: That the Standards Committee Annual Report 2015/16, attached as an Appendix, be noted, endorsed and published on the Council's website.

33 COMPLAINTS STATISTICS

The Committee considered the complaints statistics for 2015/16 as set down at pages 9 to 14 of the Book of Reports.

RESOLVED: That the Standards Complaints Statistics, attached at Appendix 1, be noted.

34 WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17 AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee considered the Work Programme and noted that an update on the Whistleblowing Code would be considered at the next meeting on 21 March 2017.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme, as amended, be noted.

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Chairman