

Time commenced – 6.00pm
Finished – 6.26pm

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

31 October 2023

Present: Councillors S Khan (Chair), Atwal, Pattison, Prosser (substitute for Councillor Graves) and Independent Persons Alan Cameron, Alistair Davies and Graham Knight

In Attendance: Emily Feenan – Director of Corporate Governance, Property and Procurement and Monitoring Officer
Steven Mason – Democratic Services Officer

13/23 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Graves and P Ingall

14/23 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were none.

15/23 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

16/23 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 August 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 August were agreed as a correct record.

17/23 Standards Committee Forward Plan

The Committee received a report of the Director of Corporate Governance, Property and Procurement and Monitoring Officer on Standards Committee Forward Plan.

The report provided members with the opportunity to review and update items on the committee's work programme.

It was reported that the Standards Committee held a broad range of responsibilities in respect of maintaining high standards of behaviour amongst councillors and co-opted members and monitoring the effectiveness of several codes and protocols relating to councillor conduct.

The Forward Plan was attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

Members noted that at its meeting on 25 January 2022, it was resolved that the Councillors' Code of Conduct be added to the Standards Committee Forward Plan for the next meeting and that it would be regularly reviewed thereafter. The Code of Conduct was attached at Appendix 2 of the report for that purpose.

The procedures for the assessment and review of allegations of breaches of the Councillors' Code of Conduct were attached at Appendix 3 for the same purpose.

Members agreed that, where possible, any draft documents on the Forward Plan should be circulated to the committee ahead of the meetings at which they were to be considered.

Resolved:

- 1. to note the Standards Committee Forward Plan; and**
- 2. to request that, where possible, any draft documents on the Forward Plan be circulated to the committee ahead of the meetings at which they are to be considered.**

18/23 Volume and Outcomes of Councillor Complaints 2023/24

The Committee received a report of the Director of Corporate Governance, Property and Procurement and Monitoring Officer on Volume and Outcomes of Councillor Complaints 2023/24.

The report provided the Committee with an update on the volume and outcomes of Councillor complaints dealt with in the 2023/24 municipal year.

It was reported that nine complaints had been received in the 2023/24 municipal year and that all nine had been dismissed.

It was also reported that it was important to note that when a complaint was dismissed, this included circumstances by which a subject member had taken steps to resolve a complaint by way of an informal resolution to the satisfaction of the Monitoring Officer and that this could include a written apology or some other form of corrective action by the councillor concerned.

Members noted that in accordance with the procedures for the assessment and review of allegations of breaches of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, five out of the nine complaints had been dismissed following an apology being issued by the subject member, either directly to the complainant or to the Monitoring Officer.

Resolved to note the volume and outcome of Councillor complaints in 2023/24 as outlined in the report.

19/23 Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

20/23 Summaries of Councillor Complaints 2023/24

The Committee considered an exempt report of the Director of Corporate Governance, Property and Procurement and Monitoring Officer on Summaries of Councillor Complaints 2023/24.

The report provided the committee with details of Councillor complaints dealt with in the 2023/24 municipal year.

Resolved to note the summaries of Councillor complaints 2023/24 contained in the report.

MINUTES END