

Standards Committee

Wednesday, 3 November 2021

Present: Councillor F Lott (Chair)
Councillors W Lott, L Bartoli, B Burdis, D Cox, E Darke,
Janet Hunter and P Oliver

Apologies: Councillors M Thirlaway

SC8 /21 Appointment of Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

SC9 /21 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

SC10 /21 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous Standards Committee meeting held on 10 June 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

SC11 /21 Review of the Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members of the Authority

The Committee considered the report which set out the work of the Code of Conduct Working Group in reviewing the Authority's Code of Conduct against the recently published Local Government Association (LGA) Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

The Committee considered the proposed revised Code which was set out as appendix 3 to the report.

Members raised an issue in relation to the register of interest and the publication of home address information in the light of recent security concerns. Members were advised that any interest in land in the Borough should be listed on the register of interests as a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI). However, in the current circumstances, the Monitoring Officer had agreed that this information should be redacted from the published document for all Councillors for an initial period of 6 months as a sensitive interest.

It was noted that there was an intention to provide training for all members on completion of the register of interests form and to make some changes to how updates to the register are submitted.

Members agreed to refer the revised Code of Conduct to the Constitution Task Group.

Resolved: That the revised Code of Conduct set out at Appendix 3 to the report be referred to the Constitution Task Group with a recommendation from this Committee that the revised code be accepted and referred to full Council for approval.

SC12 /21 Standards Committee Action Plan/Work Programme 2021/22

The Committee considered the report which set out the action plan/work programme of the Committee for the year up to 31 March 2022.

It was noted that Cllr Lott was looking to attend some Standards Committee meetings at other authorities in the region and that dates are being sought for these visits. It was suggested that these dates be circulated to members of the Committee as other members may also wish to attend these visits.

In relation to Item 5 on the agenda, it was noted that the LGA had recently published some additional guidance on Complaints Handling and it was suggested that the remit of the Code of Conduct Working Group should be expanded to review the Council's Local Arrangements for dealing with complaints against councillors in line with this guidance. It was agreed that this should be added to the work programme.

Resolved: That the remit of the Code of Conduct Working Group be expanded to include a review of the Local Arrangements, and this review be added to the work programme for 2021-22.