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Standards Committee

Wednesday, 8 March 2023

Present: Councillor F Lott (Chair)
Councillors T Hallway, L Bartoli, E Darke and W Lott

In attendance: Dr Stuart Green, Independent Person

Apologies: Councillors Janet Hunter and W Samuel

SC19 /23 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest.

SC20 /23 Exclusion Resolution

Resolved: that the Committee proceed in public and the agenda papers be made available.

SC21 /23 Complaint NT07/2021-22

The Committee considered the report which set out the review of the Independent Person from South Tyneside Council of the decision of the Standards Committee taken on 7 December 2022 regarding complaint NT07/2021-22. The report also set out options for the Committee to consider.

The Committee noted that the Independent Person, having reviewed all of the documents relevant to the case, concluded in his report that he agreed with the reasoning and conclusions of the Committee and agreed that the decisions reached should stand.

The Committee sought the views of the Independent Person, Dr Stuart Green, who was in attendance at the meeting. Dr Green stated that he agreed with the decision of the Committee and the findings of the review.

The original finding of the Committee had been that Councillor Liam Bones had breached Paragraph 1 Part 1 of the Code of Conduct – Treating others with Respect, and that Councillor Bones should:

1. Undertake training on the Member/Officer Relations Protocol, such training to be arranged by the Monitoring Officer; and
2. Write a letter of apology to the former Monitoring Officer and that the letter should be supplied to, and agreed with the Monitoring Officer, (or in her absence one of her team) before it is sent to the former Monitoring Officer.

It was noted that, since the meeting of the Standards Committee on 7 December, Councillor Bones had attended training on the Member/Officer Relations Protocol and a letter of apology had been submitted to the Monitoring Officer.

Resolved: that the Committee agree:

1. to receive the review report of the Independent Person from South Tyneside Council regarding complaint NT07/2021-22; and
2. to confirm the decision of the Standards Committee taken on 7 December 2022.