

Standards Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2013

Present

Independent Co-opted Members: A. Isles – in the Chair
Councillors P Andrews, M Clayton, G Evans and A Trotman
Ringway Parish Council - Councillor C O'Donovan
Also present in their capacity as Independent Persons: Ms N Malik

Apologies

Councillor Taylor

ST/13/12 Appointment of Chair

The Committee agreed to appoint Ms Amanda Isles as chair for this meeting.

ST/13/13 Minutes

The Committee agreed to change the minutes of the meeting on 24 June to record Councillor Trotman's apologies.

Decision

To approve the minutes of the committee meeting held on 24 June 2013 as a correct record subject to the above amendment.

ST/13/14 Resignation of the Former Chair of the Committee

Members noted the resignation of Professor Stephen Hardy who was appointed independent co-opted member and chair of the committee in October 2012. His resignation was effective from July 2013. Members thanked Professor Hardy for his work to date and wished him well for the future.

Decision

To note that Professor Stephen Hardy has resigned as Chair of the Standards Committee and to wish him luck for the future.

ST/13/15 Monitoring Officer report on Member Complaints

The Deputy Monitoring Officer provided members with an update on the number of complaints that members have breached the Council's code of conduct for members received during 11 July 2012 – 8 November 2013. During this period, the Monitoring Officer received 20 complaints.

Eight of these complaints have been withdrawn or no further action taken. The Deputy Monitoring Officer explained that these were usually where correspondence was not clear about whether the complaint was in relation to a breach of the code of conduct. Of the remaining 12 complaints, 8 were rejected following initial

assessment, 1 has been referred for investigation 2 have been referred to one of the Council's independent persons for consultation, and 1 recently received request is yet to be assessed.

A member queried the reasons why member complaints would have revenue budget implications. The Principal Solicitor explained that the costs were minimal, but they covered translations or external support, for example where an allegation of a breach of the code has been referred for investigation and an external investigator is required due to a potential conflict of interest. All costs are funded from the Monitoring Officer's budget.

Decision

To note the report.

ST/13/17 Work Programme

The Committee considered a report of the City Solicitor that proposed suggested items for future meetings of the Committee in January and March.

It would be checked whether items from March could be brought forward to be considered at the January meeting. Members also noted the need to review the frequency and timing of committee meetings taking place in the next municipal year. This would be agreed at the January meeting. The Committee agreed to the items on the work programme subject to the considerations set out above.

Decision

To approve the work programme subject to the considerations set out above.