



STANDARDS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 26 APRIL 2016

10.45 AM (OR AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CABINET, WHICHEVER IS THE LATER)
COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, LEWES

MEMBERSHIP - Councillor Richard Stogdon (Chair)
Councillors Mike Blanch, Stuart Earl, Michael Ensor, Philip Howson and
Daniel Shing

A G E N D A

- 1 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2015 (*Pages 3 - 4*)
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Disclosure of Personal Interests
Disclosure by all Members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct
- 4 Notification of urgent items
Notification of items which the Chair considers to be urgent and proposes to take at the end of the agenda. Any members who wish to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chair before the start of the meeting. In so doing, they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgently
- 5 Annual Report (*Pages 5 - 8*)
Report by the Assistant Chief Executive
- 6 Any other urgent items

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive
County Hall, St Anne's Crescent
LEWES BN7 1UE

18 April 2016

Contact Andy Cottell, 01273 481955,
Email: andy.cottell@eastsussex.gov.uk

1.

This page is intentionally left blank

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Standards Committee held on Tuesday 21 April 2015 at County Hall, Lewes.

PRESENT - Councillor Stogdon (Chair),
Councillors Blanch, Daniel, Earl, Ensor, Howson and D Shing

1. MINUTES

1.1 RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 22 April 2014 as a correct record.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Councillors Blanch, Ensor and D Shing

3. REPORTS

3.1 A copy of the report referred to below is contained in the minute book.

4. ANNUAL REPORT

4.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive that provided an update in relation to Member conduct issues and the work of the Standards Committee.

4.2 It was RESOLVED to:

(1) note the report; and

(2) agree the report for submission to the County Council for consideration

5. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

5.1 It was RESOLVED to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the remaining agenda items on the grounds that if the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as specified in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to an individual.

6. DELEGATED INVESTIGATOR'S REPORT REGARDING COMPLAINT REFERENCE SC.001.15

6.1 The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Chief Executive, the report considered by the Assessment Sub Committee and the Decision Notice, the Investigating Officer's report and the observations of the Independent Person.

6.2 It was RESOLVED to accept the finding of no failure (ie that the subject Member had not breached the Code) and that a 'Finding of no Failure' Notice be sent to the Subject Member and the Complainant

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to: **Standards Committee**

Date: **26 April 2016**

Title of report: **Annual Report of the Standards Committee**

By: **Assistant Chief Executive**

Purpose of report: **To provide an update on Member Conduct issues, the work of the Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Standards Committee is recommended to

- 1) note the report; and**
 - 2) agree the report for submission to the County Council for consideration.**
-

1. Background information

1.1 Between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016 one complaint was received against a Member of the County Council. The complaint was considered by the Assessment Sub Committee. The Assessment Sub Committee decided to refer the case to the Monitoring Officer for action other than an investigation namely that an apology should be issued.

1.2 During 2015/15 the Committee met to consider the Delegated Investigator's report regarding a complaint that was received during 2014/15 which had been considered by an Assessment Sub Committee and had been referred to the Monitoring Officer for investigation. Having considered the report and questioned the Investigator, the Committee agreed to accept the finding of no failure (ie that the subject Member had not breached the Code) and that a 'Finding of no Failure' Notice be sent to the Subject Member and the Complainant.

1.3 It is considered that the standards of conduct among Members and co-opted members of the Council remain high and maintaining good standards is taken seriously. There was one complaint considered by the Assessment Sub Committee in 2015/16, three in 2014/15, one case in 2013/14, one in 2012/13 one in 2011/12, two in 2010/11 and 4 in 2009/10.

2. Applications for Dispensation

2.1 In limited circumstances, Members can apply in writing for dispensations to take part in business that they would otherwise have been unable to participate in through having prejudicial interests. During 2015/16 there were no applications for dispensations.

2.2 All dispensations are entered on the register of Members' interests and remain there for the appropriate period.

3. Register of Members' Interests

3.1 The Monitoring Officer is required to establish and maintain a register of interests of Members of the Council. All Members have completed and returned their registers and are

reminded every six months of the need to notify the Monitoring Officer of any changes. The registers are available for public inspection and are available on the Council's website.

3.2 A register of Gifts and Hospitality is also maintained by the Monitoring Officer. Members have to register gifts and hospitality received with an estimated value of £50 or more. Councillors are reminded every 6 months of the need to declare gifts and hospitality of such a value.

3.3 There is an ongoing requirement to keep the information of the register of interest form up to date. Councillors must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new registerable personal interest or change to any registered interest, give written notification to the Monitoring Officer.

4. Training

4.1 Guidance regarding the standards regime has previously been circulated to all newly elected councillors. The Code of Conduct including register of interests, personal interests, disclosable pecuniary interests and gifts and hospitality, were covered during presentation at the Induction Day on 9 May 2013.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The Committee is recommended to note the report and to recommend to County Council the Annual Report of the Standards Committee for consideration.

PHILIP BAKER

Assistant Chief Executive

Contact Officer – Andy Cottell, Democratic Services Manager (01273 481955)

Local Members: All

Background Documents: None

Complaints received by the Standards Committee 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Reference	Date Received	Type and Date of Committee	Complainant	Summary of Complaint	Outcome	Resolved
SC.001.15	7 December 2014	Assessment Sub Committee 21 January 2015 Standards Committee 21 April 2015	Member of the public	Breach of General Principles of Code of Conduct (Paragraph 1)	Referred to Monitoring Officer for investigation Finding of no failure	Yes
SC.002.15	20 April 2015	Assessment Sub Committee 2 June 2015	Member of the public	Breach of General Principles of Code of Conduct (Paragraphs 1, 2a, 2d, 4ai, 4aiii, 4b and 5)	Referred to Monitoring Officer for other action	Yes

This page is intentionally left blank