

Standards Committee
18 JUNE 2020

Present: Councillors: Karen Burgess, Peter Burgess, Brian Donnelly, Frances Haigh, Jim Sanson, Diana van der Klugt, Philip Baxter, Paul Bickford and John Donaldson

Absent: Councillors: Godfrey Newman

Also Present: Ruth Fletcher

SC/1 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED

That Councillor Brian Donnelly be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing Council year.

SC/2 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED

That Councillor Diana van der Klugt be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing Council year.

SC/3 **TO APPROVE THE TIME OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE ENSUING YEAR**

RESOLVED

That the Standards Committee meet at 10am, on a Wednesday where possible, for the ensuing Council year.

SC/4 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

SC/5 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 January were approved, subject to the following minor amendment to the last sentence of item SC/17 to clarify its meaning: 'Many councils did name and shame subject members and there was a discussion around whether Horsham should do this so that it might act as a deterrent and in view of the fact that there were **within the sanctions, few teeth that could** be applied.' A comma was also added after the word 'involved' in the first paragraph of the resolution. The minutes, as amended, were approved by the Committee and would be signed at a later date.

SC/6 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

SC/7 **UPDATE ON CONDUCT CASES**

The Legal Services Business Manager gave an update on Code of Conduct cases received between April 2019 and March 2020. There had been 20 cases, with a further four received since 1 April 2020. They all related to Parish Councillors and a significant majority involved and same Parish Council.

Six cases had been determined by the Local Assessment Sub-Committee. Nine had been determined by the Monitoring Officer, who had sought the advice of the Independent Person as part of the process. It was noted that further sub-committees had been postponed in the light of the pandemic.

SC/8 **UPDATE ON THE NEW MODEL CODE AND NEW SANCTIONS FOR MEMBERS IN BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Monitoring Officer updated the Committee on the Local Government Association's consultation on a new Model Code of Conduct. The consultation deadline had been extended to 17 August. Members noted that, once finalised, the new Model Code would be used throughout the District to ensure consistency.

It was agreed that a response to the consultation would be collated by the Monitoring Officer.

SC/9 **RECRUITMENT OF ANOTHER INDEPENDENT MEMBER**

It was agreed that the process of recruiting a second Independent Person would commence in the next few weeks.

SC/10 **DISCUSSION ON THE PLANNED UPDATING OF THE STANDARDS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Committee would undertake a review of the complaints procedure with a view to making it more streamlined.

SC/11 **TRAINING FOR NEW MEMBERS TO THE COMMITTEE**

Members were advised that training webinars were being produced by the LGA and would be available after the consultation on the draft Model Code of Conduct had finished.

The meeting closed at 11.04 am having commenced at 10.00 am

CHAIRMAN