

**Standards Committee**  
**Minutes of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 13 November 2013**

**Present:**

Mr T Garrod  
Mr B Hannah  
Mr M Kiddle- Morris

Mr I Monson  
Mr R Parkinson-Hare

**Also in Attendance:**

Mrs S Farrell – Democratic Support Manager  
Mr G Insull – Asst Head of Democratic Services  
Ms V McNeill – Head of Law and Monitoring Officer

**1. Election of Chairman**

Mr Ian Monson was elected Chairman for the ensuing Council year.

**2. Election of Vice-Chairman**

Mr Mark Kiddle-Morris was elected Vice Chairman for the ensuing Council year.

**3. Apologies**

Mr A Byrne and Mr P Hacon gave their apologies.

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2013 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**4. Declarations of Interest**

Mr B Hannah explained that he wished to declare an Other Interest, as an unnamed member involved with the complaints forming part of the report at agenda item 7 - Standards and Conduct: Performance and Monitoring Report.

**5. Urgent Business**

There was none.

**6. Standards and Conduct: Performance and Monitoring Report**

6.1 The annexed report (item 7) by the Head of Law and Monitoring Officer was received.

6.2 The following points were raised:

- Members noted Article 9 of the Constitution which the Head of Law

had tabled to members new to this Committee of its role.

- It was noted that this was the first meeting held since the May elections and was now subject to the Widdicombe principles of proportional representation on Committees.
- This report was presented following the decision of a Standards Committee prior to the election, with the intention of sharing complaints to enable trends, themes or concerns from complaints against members to be addressed at an early stage. On this occasion, there had been just 4 complaints and no reporting since June 2013, which did not demonstrate any pattern.
- The role of Independent Person to the Standards Committee was explained as the role differed post the Localism Act 2011. The current postholder, Mr Stephen Revell, had been appointed to the post for 4 years. There was a requirement for him to be consulted whenever the Council undertook an investigation or held a hearing. However, more generally his remit was dependent on the Standards Committee. At the March 2013 Committee it had been agreed that Mr Revell would be invited to Standards Committee meetings on an as and when basis. The members of this Committee agreed to continue with this approach.
- It was noted that the Independent Person had no voting powers but Regulations confirmed that his views had to be sought at a hearing but that the Committee was not bound to adhere to the views expressed.
- It was also noted that there was a training workshop being arranged currently for Independent Persons across Norfolk and that Committee members would be invited to attend.
- Members were invited to engage in specific training to support them in the work of this Committee and agreed that procedural standards and conduct matters be arranged to coincide with the next Standards Committee meeting on 19 March 2014.
- Lastly, it was noted that there was now no repository for collating standards complaints nationally and so no comparisons on performance, issues or hot topics could be monitored.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the report updating the Standards Committee on standards and conduct matters from March 2013 to October 2013
2. To continue with the approach taken to date and to invite the Independent Person Mr Stephen Revell, to Standards Committee meetings for his commentary and advice on an as and when basis
3. To arrange a training event on procedural standards and conduct matters, to coincide with the next Standards Committee meeting on 19 March 2014.

## **7. Register of Councillors' Interests**

- 7.1 The annexed report (item 8) by the Head of Law and Monitoring Officer was received.

7.2 The following points were noted:

- The Head of Law reminded members that it was now a criminal offence to fail to declare Discloseable Pecuniary Interests.
- Work was currently ongoing to upload the information provided regarding Councillors' Interests onto the Council's website

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**8. Review of Standards Regime following the Localism Act 2011**

8.1 The annexed report (item 9) by the Head of Law and Monitoring Officer was received and in particular, members welcomed the House of Commons Library note reviewing the operation of the new provisions.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

The meeting finished at 11.00am

**Chairman  
Mr Ian Monson**



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