

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

11th December 2018

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Harrison (Chairman), Councillor Atkin (Vice-Chairman) and Stanton

Labour Group

Councillor Dunn

Independent Persons

Mr P Purnell

SC/1 **APOLOGIES**

The Committee was informed that apologies had been received from Councillor Mrs Hall (Conservative Group), Councillor Dr Pearson (Labour Group) and Mr P Smith, Independent Person.

SC/2 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th November 2017 were noted, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

SC/3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that no declarations of interest had been received.

SC/4 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO.10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

SC/5 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO.11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO SUB-COMMITTEE

SC/6 **SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS**

The Committee received the Report summarising the formal complaints investigated by the Monitoring Officer and the action taken in each case. The Monitoring Officer noted there were a higher number of complaints received this year regarding District Councillors and Parish Councillors, with a majority

relating to Parish Councils. All complaints were determined in counsel with the Independent Persons and were outlined for the Committee in Annexe A.

Councillor Atkin queried at which point in the process an Independent Person is consulted in relation to a complaint. The Monitoring Officer addressed this by explaining the Independent Person is consulted and advised of the decision made.

Councillor Stanton sought clarification by which stage a Member would be informed a complaint had been made. The Monitoring Officer highlighted the different approaches taken with District Councillors and Parish Councillors. District Councillors would receive a telephone call from the Monitoring Officer prior to a letter being distributed outlining the complaint. The Monitoring Officer would write to a Parish Councillor to confirm receipt of a complaint outlining the next steps to manage expectations. Councillor Stanton noted his appreciation for how complaints are managed currently.

Councillor Harrison joined the Meeting at 18:05 and chaired the remainder of the Meeting.

Councillor Dunn questioned how complaints made out of vexation to cause trouble and anxiety are noted and handled. The Monitoring Officer addressed the query, outlining a Tit for Tat outcome is able to be utilised at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer. Councillor Atkin questioned if the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils was consulted or if matters were referred regarding Parish Councillors. The Monitoring Officer responded to the query, noting Parish Clerks may seek advice from the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils but are more often signposted back to the Monitoring Officer.

In relation to the minutes of the last Meeting of this Committee, Members sought clarification how information was disseminated to Parish Councillors and Clerks in the absence of a Parish Liaison meeting. The Monitoring Officer explained although the Parish Liaison meeting had been postponed, Parish Council Clerks and Parish Councillors have received letters outlining the complaints procedure under the Members' Code of Conduct as well as up to date training from the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils.

The Chairman suggested further Code of Conduct training for Members may be considered.

RESOLVED:-

1.1 Members noted the summary of complaints considered by the Monitoring Officer and Independent Persons.

The Meeting terminated at 6.15PM

COUNCILLOR J HARRISON

CHAIRMAN