

Standards Committee Minutes

Date: 3 June 2014

Time: 6.15 - 6.35 pm

PRESENT: Councillor A D Collingwood (in the Chair)

Councillors I Bates, D J Carroll, Mrs G A Jones, Ms J D Wassell, Parish Cllrs J Sherlock and Mrs V Smith

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J A Savage, Councillor R Wilson, G Houalla and Parish Councillor Ms N Howard.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor R J Scott

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all present to the first meeting of the Standards Committee of the new municipal year, introducing himself as the new Chairman of the Committee, and Councillor D J Carroll as Vice-Chairman: these appointments having been made by Council at its Annual Council meeting on 12 May 2014.

The Chairman reminded Members of the Committee's over-arching function to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the Members and Co-opted Members of Wycombe District Council, and its duty of impartiality and independence.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2014 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee received and noted its terms of reference, as set out in Part 2 of the Constitution. The Chairman reminded Members that subject to a decision shortly due to be taken by the Regulatory and Appeals Committee, responsibility for monitoring of the Council's complaints procedure would be moving into Cabinet's remit; however, the Standards Committee will continue to receive this information informally by means of a regular information sheet.

In debate it was proposed that appropriately trained Standing Deputies be permitted on the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED: That the terms of reference be noted, and that as the Committee would wish to pursue an amendment to the Constitution to allow for Standing Deputies to be appointed to the Committee, a report be submitted to the Regulatory and Appeals Committee.

5 OVERVIEW AND REVIEW OF CURRENT STANDARDS ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

The Committee received a report which summarised the current Standards arrangements for elected members within Wycombe District Council and for Town and Parish councils in the District, including the role of the Standards Committee. In response to a recommendation from the Chairman the Committee agreed that insofar as possible Hearings Panels should comprise the maximum five members.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

6 STANDARDS TRAINING FOR MEMBERS

The Committee received a report which outlined recent training provided in relation to Standards issues and which invited Members to consider future training requirements.

The Committee highlighted the importance of training in Standards matters for all Members, and recommended that all Members should undertake Standards training at least once during their four year cycle. It was agreed that arrangements should be made for a further training event, and the District Solicitor undertook to consider arrangements for further training in the autumn, possibly to take place immediately following the Committee's October meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted, and a further training event for all Members be arranged.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

Emma Lund - Democratic Services
Julie Openshaw - District Solicitor