

**Minutes of the Standards Sub-Committee
13 October 2022**

Present:

I. Winter (Independent Chairman)

Councillors:

M.M. Attewell

J.R. Boughtflower

D. Saliagopoulos

In Attendance: D. Price (Independent Vice-Chairman, remotely)

539/22 Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

540/22 Exclusion of Press and Public

The Panel considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following matter on the grounds that it was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

The Panel in making its decision had regard to all circumstances and was satisfied that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED that in the interest of having a frank and open discussion about the matter, the press and public be excluded from the meeting.

541/22 Exempt complaint assessment report against Councillor C

The Panel considered the report of the Monitoring Officer setting out an allegation by way of a complaint received from a member of the public about Councillor C.

The Monitoring Officer detailed the allegations that had been made and the key considerations for the assessment panel.

The panel went on to consider the complaint having regard to the assessment criteria.

The panel considered the options open to it:

- a) ask the monitoring officer to direct that the complaint is investigated;
- b) direct the Monitoring Officer to take other appropriate action short of a formal investigation, for instance trying to secure an apology;
- c) take no action in respect of the complaint; this may be where the complaint appears to be trivial, vexatious, malicious, politically motivated or tit-for-tat.

The panel had regard to advice from the independent person and noted that Councillor C had declined to offer an apology to the complainant.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Monitoring Officer be directed to write to Councillor C to remind them of the expected standards of conduct.

542/22 Exempt complaint assessment report against Councillor D

The Panel considered the report of the Monitoring Officer setting out an allegation by way of a complaint received from an officer about Councillor D.

The Monitoring Officer detailed the allegations that had been made and the key considerations for the assessment panel.

The panel went on to consider the complaint having regard to the assessment criteria.

The panel considered the options open to it:

- a) ask the monitoring officer to direct that the complaint is investigated;
- b) direct the Monitoring Officer to take other appropriate action short of a formal investigation, for instance trying to secure an apology;
- c) take no action in respect of the complaint; this may be where the complaint appears to be trivial, vexatious, malicious, politically motivated or tit-for-tat.

The panel had regard to advice from the independent person and noted that Councillor D had declined to offer an apology to the complainant.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Monitoring Officer:

1. Be directed to write to Councillor C to remind them of the expected standards of conduct.
2. Request, on behalf of the sub-committee, that a written apology be provided to the complainant.
3. In the event that an apology not be forthcoming, instigates an investigation into the complaint, for consideration by a separate hearings sub-committee.

Further comments from the sub-committee

The sub-committee requested that:

1. A generalised communication on the expected standards of conduct be distributed to members.
2. Training sessions on the member code of conduct continue to be provided.
3. A generalised communication across the organisation about the protocol for member-officer relations be distributed.