



Minutes of the meeting of the STANDARDS COMMITTEE held on TUESDAY 8 MARCH 2016 at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Brunning (Chair)
Councillors Brackenbury (Substitute for Councillor McPake),
Coventry, D Hopkins, Small and Wallis

Parish Councillors Ballantyne, Carman and Walker

Officers: S Gerrard (Monitoring Officer/Interim Service Director ([Legal and Democratic Services]) and T Milner (Committee Manager).

Apologies: Councillors Eastman, McDonald, McKenzie and McPake.

ST07 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

It was noted that Parish Councillor I Carmen would not be standing for re-election as a parish councillor in the forthcoming local elections, and as a consequence it would be necessary to fill the vacancy on the Committee.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee thanked Councillor I Carmen for his contribution over the last 3 years and wished him well for the future.

ST08 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee on 16 June 2015 be approved and signed by the Chair.

ST09 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None declared.

ST10 PERIOD REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

The Committee considered the Monitoring Officer's Periodic report in respect of complaints and investigations covered during the period from 1 June 2015 to 23 February 2016.

The Committee heard that 11 complaints had been received up to 23 February 2016, with ten complaints against parish councillors. The Monitoring Officer indicated that although the complaints received were mainly of a trivial nature, relating to either varying and diverse styles of people working together or were due to a clash of personalities.

It was reported that training had been provided to the respective parish councillors who were indicated in the complaints, to aid as a reminder about the ethics and Code of Conduct of councillors and also in respect of the Council's reputation.

The Monitoring Officer commented that the Council does not regulate parish councils, but it was the responsibility of the individual parish councils to regulate them-selves appropriately and professionally. Additionally, parish council's Chairs' also had a responsibility to ensure that parish council meetings were managed in an effective manner.

The Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that he would be leaving the Council at the end of May 2016, and provided reassurance that although there were 7 Standards complaints being looked at and it was too early to make any determination on the complaints received, that should any of the complaints warrant further investigation, he would have no hesitation in referring the complaints to the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

ST11

DISPENSATIONS

The Committee considered a report in respect of Dispensations in respect of Milton Keynes Development Partnership from the Monitoring Officer.

The Committee heard that it was appropriate to look at granting dispensations for Councillors, who were Directors of the Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP), to ensure there was transparency within the Council and also to avoid any doubt in respect of Section 31(4) of the Localism Act 2011. By granting the dispensations, would allow for discussions to go ahead, particularly where:

- (a) there was a contract between the Council and MKDP;
- (b) where MKDP was the Council's Corporate tenant, or vice-versa, and
- (c) if companies were to conduct private lettings and the Council required the use of MKDP officers.

Councillor Hopkins proposed that the Deputy Monitoring Officer's recommendation be agreed, this was seconded by Councillor Coventry.

RESOLVED –

That dispensations be granted from Section 31(4) of the Localism Act 2011 on the basis that granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area, such dispensations to be made in respect of all Members of Milton Keynes Council (MKC) who are Members of Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) and take effect from 8 March 2016 for the period of four years.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 6.35 PM