

MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY, 19 JULY 2016

Present:

Councillor Jackson (in the Chair)

Councillors

Clapham

Hobson

Hunter

Singleton

In Attendance:

Mrs Helen Broughton, Independent Person

Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships / Monitoring Officer

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance / Deputy Monitoring Officer

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 23 JUNE 2015

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2015 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 STANDARDS UPDATE

Members were aware of the framework for dealing with allegations of member misconduct and that the Monitoring Officer was the Council's Proper Officer for receiving allegations and considering appropriate action. Mr Towers, Monitoring Officer, provided the Committee with a schedule of all matters arising since the last report in June 2015 according to the categories within the Code of Conduct. Members noted that there were relatively few allegations received and that any that had related to the Code of Conduct had been dealt with informally.

The Committee recalled that a joint working group with Fylde Borough councillors had been proposed at the last meeting to review the framework for dealing with allegations. The Monitoring Officer reported that the working group had not met due to a change in committee membership at Fylde Borough Council and the recent appointment of a new independent person and therefore the framework would be reviewed as appropriate at a future date.

The Committee agreed to note the update report and the issues raised to date.

4 DISMISSAL ARRANGEMENTS - STATUTORY OFFICERS

Mr Towers reminded the Committee that the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 had been considered at the last meeting and related to procedural changes in instances where the Council's three statutory Chief Officers, namely the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer, were subject to a dismissal action. Members were aware that a Panel of three

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independent persons had been appointed, which would offer advice, views or recommendations to the full Council meeting which would then take the final decision in relation to any potential dismissal.

The Monitoring Officer reported that there had been some uncertainty nationally regarding interpretation of the legislation and whether it required the establishment of a Panel or a politically balanced committee. However, recent guidance from the Department Communities and Local Government had accepted that the Panel should comprise only of independent persons and therefore the Council's arrangements were in line with the guidance.

Members noted that Mrs Helen Broughton, who had been appointed recently by the Council as an independent person, had agreed to act on the Panel in that respect and that training with all three independent persons had taken place alongside a discussion on how the procedures for such instances would operate in practice. Mr Towers advised members that a report would be brought back to the next Committee meeting with further details.

The Committee agreed to note the update report and that a report would be considered at the next Standards Committee meeting on how the procedures would operate.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.15 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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