

## MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING - TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2015

### **Present:**

Councillor Jackson (in the Chair)

Councillors

Cain Clapham	I Coleman Mrs Henderson MBE	Hunter Singleton
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### **In Attendance:**

Mr Ellwood, Independent Person

Mr Mozley, Independent Person

Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance

### **1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mr Mozley advised the Committee in relation to the item 4 on the agenda 'Standards Update Report', that he was also a member of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

### **2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2014**

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2014 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **3 REVIEW OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS**

Members were aware that since the last meeting of the Committee, a workshop had taken place with councillors from Blackpool Council and Fylde Borough Council along with the independent persons, to review the Code of Conduct.

It was noted that the proposals from the workshop were that whilst the intent of the current code should be kept, the requirement to declare the sources of gifts and hospitality as a personal interest for three years was disproportionate and should be removed from the Code. It was also proposed for the layout to be simplified and in clearer English.

The Committee also noted that the working group had yet to undertake a review of the process for dealing with allegations of member misconduct and therefore sought a representative to replace Councillor Mrs Delves who had retired from office at the local election.

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The Committee agreed:

1. To recommend approval of the revised Code of Conduct for Members to Council.
2. To appoint Councillor Clapham on the joint working group with Fylde Borough Council and the independent persons.

### 4 STANDARDS UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received an update report from the Monitoring Officer on the number of issues raised on a category basis since the last report to Committee in September 2014. Members noted that the issues had been relatively minor and had been resolved informally. There were also a number instances where the issues had not been related to the Code of Conduct.

It was also noted that training had been provided on the Code of Conduct and the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations for new and returning members as part of the induction programme.

Discussion then took place on the use of social media by councillors and whether it would be beneficial for the joint working group with Fylde Borough Council and the independent persons, to consider how issues of inappropriate use could be addressed through any Codes or Protocols that were currently in place. A number of issues were highlighted including whether there could be any safeguards for councillors when comments were made on social media sites, the appropriateness of responding to comments and the use of social media in an official or personal capacity. There was general agreement that the joint working group could look at these issues and that comments from other Council members could also be fed back to the working group.

The Monitoring Officer also reported on legislative changes in relation to the role of the independent persons in that the Council was required to invite its independent persons to form a Panel that would make recommendations to the Council in disciplinary cases relating to certain statutory officers. Members noted that the three independent persons had agreed to fulfil this role.

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

### Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.35 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:  
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