

MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING - MONDAY, 22 JANUARY 2018

Present:

Councillor Jackson (in the Chair)

Councillors

Clapham	Mrs Henderson	I Taylor
Collett	Hunter	L Williams

In Attendance:

Mrs Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance
Mr Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships
Mr Chris Williams, Democratic Services Adviser

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY 2017

The Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2017 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3 REGISTERING AND DECLARING INTERESTS

The Committee considered the update report from the Monitoring Officer on the current situation concerning the registering and declaring of interests by elected members. Mr Towers advised that at the last meeting of the Standards Committee, consideration was given to instances of failure to register and declare interests, in particular regarding the registration of disclosable pecuniary interests. The Committee had agreed a number of recommendations at that meeting including: mandatory training of all elected members with regard to registering and disclosing interests, an annual review of interests and the drafting of a protocol between the Council and the Constabulary for referring potential failures to register or declare disclosable pecuniary interests.

In relation to the recommendations agreed at the last Committee meeting, Mr Towers reported that 34 Members had now completed the mandatory training and that a further session would be held for any members who had not yet attended.

Members noted that following the relative success of the Code of Conduct training it was recommended that further training in the same format be held for elected members with regard to Code of Conduct and standards of behaviour, working relationships with officers with reference to the 'Protocol on Member/Officer Relations' and Planning Protocol (for Planning Committee members). Mrs Hurst added that a planned IPool interactive training refresher package was being developed and Members would be notified when this became available.

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Mr Towers went on to outline the two draft documents that had been circulated to Committee members. The first document related to interpretative guidance developed to assist members in completing their registration of interests form and to aid Member's understanding of the nature of individual types of interests. It was hoped that this would encourage greater compliance with regards to the completion of Register of Interest forms and declaring of interests at meetings.

Members were advised that the wording related to declarations of interests on the cover of all formal Council committee agendas had now been amended to include a prompt on the different types of interests and that members would be prompted to declare appropriately at meetings. It was also recommended that an Annual Review of Register of Interest forms be undertaken following the Annual Meeting of Council each year. Mr Towers added that a minor constitutional change to the way declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) and prejudicial interests were dealt with at full Council meetings when Executive Member reports were presented would also be required and the change would necessitate an 'ask and answer' procedure to be put in place.

Mr Towers referred to the Protocol between Lancashire Constabulary and the Monitoring Officer that had been drafted and attached at Appendix 3(b) of the report. The Committee noted that the recommendation was that the draft protocol serves as a working document for consideration with Lancashire Constabulary with a final draft being brought back for endorsement to the Committee on 12 June 2017.

Resolved:

1. To endorse the interpretative guidance at Appendix 3a of the report and request that the Monitoring Officer circulates it to elected members and to confirm that the Monitoring Officer keeps the guidance under review and publishes any revised version, as and when necessary.
2. To agree that elected members be asked to complete an annual review of their register of interest forms following each year's annual meeting, as well as within 28 days of any change to their circumstances.
3. To agree that the draft Protocol at Appendix 3b of the report forms the basis of further discussion with Lancashire Constabulary.
4. To request that the Monitoring Officer reports to the Annual Council meeting to alter the constitution to reflect the change needed in dealing with declaration of interests in Executive Member reports at Council.
5. To support further training for members on the Code and related Protocols and to request the Monitoring Officer to report back at a future Committee meeting.

4 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee noted the date of the next meeting as Tuesday 12 June 2018.

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Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.22 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:

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