

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held on 19 June 2024
at 6.00 pm

Present

Councillors

A Glover (Chairman)
E Buczkowski (Vice Chairman),
J Buczkowski, F J Colthorpe, G Czapiewski,
M Fletcher, L Taylor and D Wulff

Also Present

Councillor(s)

Cllr D Broom Cllr S Keable (online) and Cllr L Knight

Also Present

Officer(s):

Maria De Leburne (Director of Legal, HR & Governance
(Monitoring Officer)) and Laura Woon (Democratic
Services Manager)

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Vice-Chairman of the Council invited nominations for the election of a Chairman for the municipal year 2024/25.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that Cllr A Glover be elected Chairman of the Committee for the municipal year 2024/25.

(Proposed by Cllr L Taylor and seconded by Cllr D Wulff)

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Chairman of the Committee invited nominations for the election of a Vice-Chairman for the municipal year 2024/25.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that Cllr E Buczkowski be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the municipal year 2024/25.

(Proposed by Cllr L Taylor and seconded by Cllr A Glover)

3 START TIME OF MEETINGS

Cllr A Glover proposed and seconded by Cllr L Taylor that the Committee to start at 5.15pm for the remainder of the 2024/25 municipal year.

The Committee **AGREED** to meet at 5.15pm for the remainder of the 2024/25 municipal year.

4 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no apologies.

5 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

None received.

6 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting were **APPROVED** as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Note: Cllr F J Colthorpe abstained from voting due to not being present at the last meeting.

7 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

No interests were declared under this item.

8 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman thanked the Committee for electing her as Chairman of the Committee.

9 **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION FOLLOWING MOTIONS APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

The Committee **NOTED** the amendments to the constitution following motions approved by Council.

10 **CONSTITUTION**

The Committee had a discussion about the wording in relation to the title Chairman within the Constitution:

The Democratic Service Manager highlighted the following:

- Research had been done to look at several other Local Authorities in relation to the word Chairman within the Constitution.
- From the following Councils: Exeter City Council, Devon County Council, East Devon District Council, North Devon District Council and Teignbridge Council, they referred to the Chairman as Chair.
- Cornwall Council referred to the Chairman as Chairman.

Discussion took place regarding:

- To update the Constitution to use the title Chairperson and to remove Chairman.
- A Chair was known as a piece of furniture and some members use Madam Chairman and Chairman,

- To have consistency in the wording used.
- Preferences for it to remain as Chairman.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

The Constitution be amended to replace Chairman with Chair.

(Proposed by Cllr E Buczkowski and seconded by Cllr L Taylor)

Note: Cllr F J Colthorpe voted against.

11 COMPLAINTS

The Committee **NOTED** a verbal update from the Director of Legal, HR and Governance (Monitoring Officer) which provided an update on complaints received

The following was highlighted:

- Two formal complaints had been received:
 - a District, Town and Parish Councillor.
 - a District Councillor.

The following was discussed:

- As to the complaint would the Committee receive the outcomes or the lessons learnt or how would this be reported?

12 DISCLOSURE BARRING SERVICE

The Committee had before it, a report * from the Director of Legal, HR & Governance (Monitoring Officer) outlining the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) for Members.

The following was highlighted:

- As part of the update to the Corporate Safeguarding Policy to Community Policy Development Group (PDG) on the 26 March 2024, Section 4 of the report made reference to 'Members and DBS checks'.
- Standards Committee was to consider whether a Member Working Group would be set up to review the potential future inclusion of DBS checks for Members within the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and related DBS Policy.

The following was discussed:

- What actions would take place in regards to a DBS that highlights a concern?
- The DBS check would provide openness and transparency for the Council.
- A policy would be required that would state who would be responsible to carry out the DBS checks and who would receive the completed check and what action would be taken if necessary.
- To support and recommend a working group that would identify guidance and protocol for Members in line with Members Code of Conduct.
- The importance of effective enforcement of the Safeguarding risk.

- The value of a DBS check and how and what Safeguarding would it provide for Members and Members of the public.
- How Members would be kept safe.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

A Member Working Group to be set up and review the potential future inclusion of DBS checks for Members within the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and related DBS Policy.

(Proposed by Cllr J Buczkowski and seconded by Cllr A Glover)

The Members of the Working Group were **AGREED** to be Cllr J Buczkowski, Cllr L Taylor and Cllr A Glover.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

13 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

The Committee requested that the following be on the agenda for the next meeting:

- The Code of Conduct Complains appeal procedures.
- Guide to making a complaint about a Councillor review.

The following was discussed:

- Seating arrangement plans at Committee meetings and members that are not a Committee member being present and sat with the Committee.
- The issues of Cabinet Members sat with the Scrutiny Committee Members and the Standards Committee reviewing this in line with the Constitution.

It was therefore **NOTED** that:

- An informal Working Group to be set up to review the seating arrangements at meetings.

(The meeting ended at 18.52pm)

CHAIRMAN