

# **STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **Minutes**

**THURSDAY, 25 MARCH 2021**

PRESENT: Councillor G Bond (Chair)

Councillors J Aberley, Mr P Brough, B Cawley, B Emery, D Fowler, I Herdman, T Holmes, K Hoptroff, Councillor B A Hughes, K J Jackson, B Johnson, Mr H Mawdsley, I Plant, L Swindlehurst, P Taylor and P Wilkinson

APOLOGIES: Councillor K Martin

35 **TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 19 November 2020 be **APPROVED** as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

36 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY:**

There were no declarations of interest made.

37 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REVISED MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT**

Paul Rushworth (Deputy Monitoring Officer) advised members that a new Model Code of Conduct had been published by the Local Government Association (LGA).

The Government's Committee on Standards in Public Life undertook a comprehensive review of local government ethical standards and published a report in January 2019 with 26 recommendations, the first of which was for the LGA to create an updated model code of conduct. This was published in December 2020 and was appended to this report. Most of the amendments related to councillors' use of social media.

The Council's current Code of Conduct was approved in July 2019 after being revised in consideration of the best practices recommendations which had been set out in the aforementioned ethical review. The Government had not yet responded to the formal recommendations within the review report. It was likely that there would be further legislative change and the Code would then require further amendment. The proposal was therefore to present a further report to members at that stage.

Given the prevalence of social media-related issues currently being experienced. It was expected that there would be changes to the sanctions available following any legislative change.

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Responding to member queries, Mark Trillo (Monitoring Officer) gave advice as to the correct use of social media by members. The Chair advised members to contact officers for any guidance or advice.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be **NOTED**.

38 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**

That, pursuant to Section 100A(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings whereby it is likely that confidential information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act would be disclosed to the public in breach of the obligation of confidence or exempt information as defined in Section 100 I (1) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act would be disclosed to the public by virtue of the Paragraphs indicated.

39 **TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.**

Members considered the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2020.

40 **COMPLAINTS MONITORING REPORT**

Members considered a report on complaints made under the Code of Conduct in the period since the committee previously met.

The meeting closed at 11.00 am

\_\_\_\_\_Chairman\_\_\_\_\_Date