



STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Meeting: Wednesday, 9 November 2022 at 6.30 pm - Virtual Meeting

Present: Councillor R Quinn (Chair)

Councillors T Ashton, S Gardner and P Roberts

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Flower and E Longden

Councillors A McKeown, A Barrow and Mr P. Carnall were also in attendance.

20/9 TO RECEIVE DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST ON ANY MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE
(Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations made.

20/10 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
(Agenda Item 3)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2022 be approved as a correct record, subject to Mr Carnall being included as an attendee.

20/11 DEBATE NOT HATE REPORT
(Agenda Item 4)

Consideration was given to the Debate Not Hate report issued by the Local Government Association under its civility in public life programme. The purpose of the programme was to address intimidation, standards of public and political discourse and behaviour in public office and provide support and advice to councils and councillors.

Councillors discussed the high levels of abuse and intimidation recorded at a national level and the lower levels experienced locally. A number of tools were available to assist councillors which included advice available via the Council's intranet and access to a confidential counselling service.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

20/12 LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL LETTER
(Agenda Item 5)

Discussion took place on the Ombudsman's Annual Letter for the period April 2021 – March 2022. No complaints had been upheld against the Borough Council but two had been upheld against its Alliance partner, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, which related to Revenues and Benefits.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the Ombudsman's Annual Letter, Appendix A to the report, be noted.

20/13 REVIEW OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT
(Agenda Item 6)

The Council's Code of Conduct for councillors was reviewed in line with best practice. It was proposed to revise the code to incorporate an element of the Local Government Association's model code with regards to other interests and deciding when it is appropriate to withdraw from participating in respect of the matter relating to that interest.

RESOLVED:

That Council be recommended to adopt the proposed revised Code of Conduct.

20/14 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC
(Agenda Item 7)

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as there may be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

20/15 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
(Agenda Item 8)

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

20/16 COMPLAINTS - STANDARDS COMMITTEE MONITORING REPORT
(Agenda Item 9)

Consideration was given to Standards complaints received by the Monitoring Officer since the previous Committee meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.18 pm

CHAIRMAN