

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 2013

PRESENT:-

Independent Members: Susan Toland (Chair), Deborah Russell (Independent Member)

Parish Representatives: Veronica Packham, Axel Palmer and Tony Crouch

Bath and North East Somerset Councillors: Sally Davis, Sarah Bevan, Eleanor Jackson, Nigel Roberts and Malcolm Lees

Officers: Vernon Hitchman (Divisional Director, Legal and Democratic Services) and Ann Swabey

68 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair (Mrs Sue Toland) welcomed everyone to the hearing.

69 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Clerk drew attention to the Emergency Evacuation Procedure.

70 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION

Apologies had been received from Dr Cyril Davies (Independent member).

71 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Malcolm Lees declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he had arranged an insurance policy for the subject councillor's company. Councillor Eleanor Jackson declared a non-pecuniary interest in her role as Chair of the Task and Finish Group on river dwellers whose remit was confined to boats as dwellings and had nothing do to do moorings. Councillor Sarah Bevan declared a non-pecuniary interest relating to her membership of the River Trust.

72 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was none. The Chair reminded the Members of the need for observing strict confidentiality in their dealings with these hearings.

73 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS

There were none.

74 ITEMS FROM COUNCILLORS AND CO-OPTED AND ADDED MEMBERS RELATING TO THE GENERAL BUSINESS OF THE COMMITTEE

There were none.

75 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 17 JANUARY 2013

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

76 COMPLAINT AGAINST A COUNCILLOR - 12-12 B&NES

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report which detailed a complaint that Councillor X had breached the Code of Conduct.

The Chair asked the Committee, with reference to Appendix 1 of the report (exclusion of access by the public to Council meetings), whether they wished the complaint to be heard in private session. On a proposal by Councillor Lees, seconded by Parish Councillor Axel Palmer, it was agreed that hearing would be heard in private.

The Committee further agreed that the hearing process would follow the Local Hearings Procedure.

Following the hearing, the Committee adjourned to make its decision. The Committee then re-convened and the Chair announced the decision in the presence of the complainant and Councillor X.

Decision

The Standards Committee has carefully considered all the information provided by the complainant and Councillor X. The Committee has concluded that, in the interests of fairness, the complaint would benefit from an independent investigation and report into the allegations. It therefore asks the Monitoring Officer to arrange an investigation and report back to the Committee by the end of March 2013.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services