

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, 15TH MAY, 2013

PRESENT:-

Independent Members: Susan Toland (Chair),

Parish Representatives: Tony Crouch and Axel Palmer

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

Officers: Vernon Hitchman (Divisional Director, Legal and Democratic Services) and Stephen McNamara (Investigating Officer)

77 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

78 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Democratic Services Officer read out the procedure.

79 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTION

Apologies were received from Dr Cyril Davies, Veronica Packham and Deborah Russell.

80 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Sarah Bevan declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee of the River Avon Trust.

Cllr Eleanor Jackson declared a non-pecuniary interest because she had dealings with the subject Councillor in her former role as Chair of the Housing and Major Projects Task and Finish Group.

Cllr Malcolm Lees declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he had arranged an insurance policy for the subject councillor's company.

81 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was none.

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

There were none.

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

There were none.

84 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 13TH DECEMBER 2012

The minutes of the meeting of 13th December 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

85 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 27TH FEBRUARY 2013

The public and exempt minutes of the meeting of the 27th February 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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

The Chair reminded Members that this was a fresh hearing of this complaint and that the proceedings would be based on the report prepared by the Investigating Officer.

RESOLVED that the Committee having been satisfied that the public interest would be better served by not disclosing relevant information, in accordance with the provisions of section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the public, with the exception of the wife and partner of the parties, be excluded from the meeting for this item of business because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended.

The Investigating Officer presented his report and answered questions put by Members and the parties. The parties made statements.

Following an adjournment the Committee **RESOLVED** as follows:

“The Standards Committee has carefully considered the Investigating Officer’s report, the later submissions and the verbal submissions by the complainant and the subject Councillor.

“The Committee recognises the strong feelings on both sides and has concluded that the subject Councillor has failed to show respect to the complainant, but that this does not amount to bullying. It has concluded that the other elements of the complaint are unfounded.

“It has decided that the subject Councillor should be rebuked for showing a lack of respect to the complainant; should apologise to the complainant in terms to be agreed with the Monitoring Officer; and the Committee suggests that the subject Councillor undertakes training in this aspect of the Code of Conduct.

“The Committee recommends that the Council considers training on “netiquette” for its Members.”

The meeting ended at 7.58 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services