

STANDARDS AND CONDUCT COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, 3RD MARCH, 2017

PRESENT: Councillor E Nash in the Chair

Councillors B Gettings, P Harrand,
J Jarosz, B Selby and A Sobel

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Hughes – Horsforth Town Council
Mr Gordon Tollefson – Independent Person

1 Appeals against refusal of inspection of documents

There were no appeals against refusals of inspection of documents.

2 Exempt Information - Possible exclusion of the press and public

There were no resolutions to exclude the public.

3 Late items

There were no late items submitted for consideration – although two appendices inadvertently omitted from the agenda pack for Item 7 were circulated.

4 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no declarations made.

5 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Townsley.

6 Minutes - 4th March 2016

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2016 be approved as a correct record.

7 Annual Report of the Standards and Conduct Committee

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support presented an annual report relating to matters within the committee's terms of reference and which provided assurances in respect of the arrangements in place for standards and conduct matters. By way of update Members were informed that since the agenda had been published a further complaint had been received in respect of a Leeds City Council member.

In reviewing the matters set out in the report, the following issues were discussed:

- Quarterly reminders issued to Leeds City Council Members to review registers of interest and the intention for the next reminder to focus on gifts and hospitality – the Chair asked if this reminder facility could also be extended to Parish and Town Councillors (via Parish and Town Council clerks);
- Sensitive Interests and the annual review of these undertaken by the Monitoring Officer;
- The intention to seek renewal of existing dispensations for Leeds City Council Members – the committee were supportive of this;
- The outcome of the assessments made of complaints which had been submitted;
- That no complaints had been received in respect of Parish and Town Councillors;
- The new Social Media guidance provided to Leeds City Council Members – the committee were supportive of the guidance being reissued to all Councillors.
- The anticipated extension to Mr Tollefson's term of office as Independent Person.

The committee noted that the annual report would be received by full Council in March in order for full Council to receive assurances as to how the authority's duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct (by Members and co-opted Members of the Council) is being discharged.

RESOLVED – The Committee resolved

- (a) To receive and note the assurances provided in respect of the Council's arrangements for Standards and Conduct;
- (b) To note that the annual report on Standards and Conduct will be considered by full Council in March 2017;
- (c) To request that quarterly reminders to review Registers of Interest be also extended to Parish and Town Councillors;
- (d) That no amendments, to either the Members' Code of Conduct or the procedures for considering complaints, are required at this time;
- (e) That the guidance to Members on the use of Social Media be reissued to all Members;
- (f) That a reminder be sent to all Members to check their register of interests on a three monthly basis.