

STANDARDS AND CONDUCT COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, 6TH MARCH, 2015

PRESENT: Councillor E Nash in the Chair

Councillors P Harrand, A McKenna and
B Selby

In

attendance: Mr G Tollefson – Independent Person.
Councillor Potter - Shadwell Town Council
and Councillor Eveleigh - Otley Town
Council

1 Appeals against refusal of inspection of documents

There were no appeals against the refusal 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.

4 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

No declarations were made.

5 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lowe and Townsley.

6 Minutes - 7th March 2014

RESOLVED – The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th March 2014 were approved as a correct record.

7 Annual Report of the Standards and Conduct Committee

The Head of Governance Services presented a report of the City Solicitor which provided the Committee with an annual report relating to matters within the Committee's terms of reference.

Members noted the assurances provided by the Head of Governance services in respect of the Standards responsibilities of Members, the Council and the Monitoring Officer. Particularly:

- Training provided;
- Registration and the declaration of interests;
- Dispensations; and
- Complaints

In discussing Parish and Town Councils two issues were raised as follows:

- 1) That register of interests are being maintained up to date; and
- 2) That each Parish and Town Council has a code of conduct in place

Assurances were given that regular contact with the clerks of the Parish and Town Councils is made to ensure registers are up to date. Further in light of upcoming elections it was confirmed that a process is in place to a) ensure Members' duties in respect of registration on interests can be complied with and b) that the Monitoring Officer's responsibilities for the publication of registers can be fulfilled.

Further it was confirmed that Parish and Town Councils have adopted a Council Code of Conduct.

The Committee also raised the changing role of Parish Councils and the impact that additional funding via the community infrastructure levy may have on number and scale of disclosable pecuniary interests arising at meetings of those bodies. The Head of Governance Services agreed to raise this point with the local/national Parish and Town Council associations as something on which they may wish to provide guidance to their members.

Members were asked to consider whether to refer the report to full Council for consideration. Members agreed that whilst it is important that full Council be aware of the work of the Committee that this year efforts be made to ensure full Council consider the minutes of this meeting rather than consider a separate report.

The Committee thanked officers and the Independent Person for their work in providing an accessible and proportionate approach to matters arising during the year.

The Committee also recorded their thanks to Councillor John Eveleigh, Councillor Debbie Potter and Councillor Martin Hughes for agreeing to form a pool of Parish and Town Councillors that can be called upon by the Committee.

RESOLVED – The Committee resolved to agree the annual report of the Standards and Conduct Committee.