

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

STANDARDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting held: 29th July 2019

Present: Julie Miller (Independent Member – Chair)
Councillor Ruth Groome
Councillor Cliff Moreton
Councillor Jonathan West
Brian Christie (Independent Member)
Stuart Kilpatrick (Independent Member)
Lloyd Landry (Independent Member)

Also Present: Mike Sawford (Independent Person)
Martin Hammond (Executive Director and Monitoring Officer)
Anne Ireson (Administrator)

19.STA.01 APOLOGIES

None.

19.STA.02 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of the Standards Advisory Committee held on 7th May 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

19.STA.03 STATUTORY OFFICERS' MODEL DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

A report was submitted which sought appointments to an Independent Panel to deal with any disciplinary issues which affected any of the three statutory officers appointed by Kettering Borough Council. The formation of an Independent Panel was in accordance with the Local Authorities Standing Orders (England) Amendment) Regulations 2015. The Regulations amended earlier rules governing statutory disciplinary and dismissal procedures for the three statutory officers.

In 2015 the regulations lacked precise detail, which was now available, and required the Council to appoint:-

- An Investigating and Disciplinary Committee
- An Appeals Committee
- An Independent Panel

- A named member with the power to suspend the Head of Paid Service immediately in an emergency

Members noted that the Council's Employment Committee met the criteria in respect of the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee, with the Chair of the Employment Committee acting as the named member with the power to suspend the Head of Paid Service immediately in an emergency. An Appeals Committee would be assembled on a case-by-case basis.

An Independent Panel would only need to meet if a dismissal had been recommended by the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee. It must comprise of at least two members drawn from the Independent Person and appointees of the Standards Advisory Committee or an independent person appointed by another Council.

In discussion, the Committee agreed that the Panel should comprise of three members, plus a named substitute. It was noted that training would be available for members of the panel if it needed to meet and expert advice would also be available.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Independent Panel comprise of 3 members with a named substitute
- (ii) the following members of the Standards Advisory Committee be appointed to the Independent Panel

Julie Miller (Chair)
Stuart Kilpatrick (Independent Member)
Mike Sawford (Independent Person)

Substitute: Lloyd Landry (Independent Member)

19.STA.04 CHANGES TO THE COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT

A report was submitted which sought approval for changes to the councillor Code of Conduct to reflect the best practice recommendations from the Committee for Standards in Public Life.

Discussion was held on the recommended changes to the Code of Conduct to reflect the inclusion of definitions of bullying and harassment and the two recommendations agreed at the last meeting of the Committee. It was felt that, in addition to written communications, reference should also be made to electronic communication. Additionally, the nine protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 in relation to bullying and harassment should also be included.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the proposed changes, with the addition of those recommended above, be recommended to Full Council for adoption; and
- (ii) the revised document be circulated to members of the Committee.

19.STA.05 UPDATE ON STANDARDS INVESTIGATION – DESBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

A report was submitted which updated Members of the Committee on progress made in relation to a standards investigation in relation to Desborough Town Council.

The Monitoring Officer explained the background to the investigation. It was noted that the investigation was expected to conclude during September and that it may be necessary to appoint a Hearings Panel to consider the complaint, if it did not prove possible to resolve it to the satisfaction of all parties.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the contents of the report be noted: and
- (ii) should a Hearings Panel meeting need to be convened, the panel comprise of the following members:-

Julie Miller (Chair)
Stuart Kilpatrick (Independent Member)
Lloyd Landry (Independent Member)
Councillor Cliff Moreton
Councillor Jonathan West

(The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 7.18 pm)

Signed
Chair

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