

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

6 September 2023

Present: Councillor Hayfield in the Chair.

Councillors Barnett, Gosling, Jarvis, Stuart and A. Wright.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Turley (Substitute Gosling).

Ellen Beaty and Chris Norton, both Independent Persons appointed under the Localism Act 2011 were also in attendance.

1 **Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

Councillor Stuart declared an interest in relation to agenda item 5, confirming that he would not participate in the debate or vote on that matter.

2 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

It was proposed that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was in the public interest that the public and press be Excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the ground that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Act.

Members agreed that whilst there is substantial public interest in allegations of breach of the Code of Conduct being considered in public, at this stage the Committee's role was to decide whether investigations should continue or be commenced in relation to the allegations concerned, rather than adjudicating on whether a breach had in fact occurred.

Resolved:

That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

3 **Review of Monitoring Officer's Decision – Councillors A & B – Report of the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer**

Summary

This report explains the steps taken in relation to a complaint against two members of a parish council and asks the Committee to decide whether the formal investigation should continue following a change in circumstances for the members concerned.

Resolved:

That having regard to the views of the Independent Persons present, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the investigation into the allegations should continue since there is significant public interest in ascertaining whether correct procedures were followed in relation to spending public funds, whether Councillors A and B declared their interests in the matters concerned and whether their treatment of other members of the Council was in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

4 Review of Monitoring Officer's Decision – Councillor C – Report of the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

Summary

This report explains the steps taken in relation to a complaint against a member of a parish council and asks the Committee to consider a request from a complainant that a formal investigation takes place.

Resolved:

That having regard to the views of the Independent Persons present, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the allegations should not be formally investigated since the person concerned is no longer a member of the parish council concerned and there is no public interest to be served.

Chairman