

Minutes

of the Meeting of

The Standards Sub-Committee

Thursday, 13 October 2022

Kenn Room

Meeting Commenced: 2.35 pm

Meeting Concluded: 3.18 pm

Councillors:

Ann Harley (Chairman)

Caroline Cherry
Stuart McQuillan

Also present (co-opted, non-voting): Ian Carrington-Porter and Anita Smith
(Independent Lay People)

Officers in attendance: Sara Saunders (Solicitor and Senior Legal Advisor) and Hazel Brinton (Committee Services Manager).

STD Election of Chairperson for the meeting (Agenda item 1) **5**

Resolved: that Councillor Harley be elected Chairperson for the meeting.

Councillor Harley in the Chair

STD Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Standing Order 37) (Agenda item 3) **6**

None declared.

STD Exclusion of the press and public (Agenda item 4) **7**

Resolved: that the press, public and officers not required by the members or officers advising to remain during the exempt session be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that its consideration will involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 1001 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Minute no. STD 8 **Reason for the Exemption**
Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972

STD 8 Complaints against two Town Councillors (Case No 5-2022-23) (Exempt Item) (Agenda item 5)

The Sub-Committee considered a complaint received from a Weston-s-Mare Town Councillor regarding two other Weston-s-Mare Town Councillors stating that they had breached the Weston-s-Mare Town Council Code of Conduct applicable to councillors of that council.

The Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer outlined the complaint. The Sub-Committee considered the complaint, together with the response from the councillors concerned and received the views of the Independent Lay People.

In discussing the key issues, the sub-committee did not consider the councillors' actions had breached the Code of Conduct. They were however deeply disappointed that the behaviour of the councillors' guests had breached the etiquette expected at a civic event and noted that the council's Code of Conduct did not codify behaviour expected at such events which they felt was an omission. The Sub-Committee commented that if the Town Council wished to cover this type of situation for future occasions in its Code of Conduct, then the Deputy Monitoring Officer or the Monitoring Officer for North Somerset Council may be able to work with the Town Clerk on drafting a clause to be included in the Code

Resolved:

- (1) that the sub-committee does not find that the councillors' conduct breached the Weston-s-Mare Town Council Code of Conduct;
- (2) that it noted with deep disappointment the behaviour of the councillors' guests at a civic event
- (3) that the sub-committee recommends that the Town Council work with the Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer at North Somerset Council to draw up a revised Code of Conduct which would include a clause relating to the omission in behaviour of councillors in managing the behaviour of their guests at a civic event in order to prevent a similar issue arising again and to allow civic events to be safe, tolerant spaces for all.

Chairman
