

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE
HELD ON 1 JULY 2020 FROM 7.00 PM TO 7.15 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: John Halsall (Chairman), John Kaiser (Vice-Chairman), Prue Bray, Gary Cowan, Graham Howe, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey and Wayne Smith
Parish/Town Council Representatives:- Sally Gurney (Co-Optee, Wokingham Town Council) and Roy Mantel (Co-Optee Twyford Parish Council)

Officers Present

Neil Carr, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist
Jennifer Lee, Senior Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director, Governance and Monitoring Officer

21. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

22. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2 March 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

23. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

24. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

25. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

26. PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL QUESTION TIME

There were no Parish or Town Council Member questions.

27. UPDATE ON COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

The Committee considered a report, set out at Agenda pages 11 to 16, which gave details of progress relating to Code of Conduct complaints since the previous meeting.

The report stated that, since the previous meeting (March 2020), three complaints had been resolved and three new complaints had been received. Andrew Moulton (Monitoring Officer) reported that a further complaint had been received since the publication of the Agenda.

Appended to the report was a summary of progress against each of the complaints.

Andrew commented on the increasing number of complaints relating to alleged misuse of social media. There had also been a number of contacts during the lockdown period which had not resulted in formal complaints.

In the ensuing discussion, Members raised the following points:

Prue Bray commented on the increasing number of complaints which appeared to be politically motivated. These complaints did not come from WBC Members but there appeared to be a discernible trend.

Prue also referred to the ongoing LGA consultation on a Model Code of Conduct. Andrew stated that the LGA consultation may help to inform the consultation on the Council's Code of Conduct agreed at the previous meeting. The Council's consultation had been delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic, but would be undertaken shortly.

Imogen Shepherd-Dubey commented on the timeframe for investigating Code of Conduct complaints and requested a speedier resolution.

John Halsall commented on the number of complaints over the past year which had resulted in no action being taken. He also gave examples of local issues which had become more contentious such as conflict between cyclists and pedestrians.

RESOLVED: That the update report on Code of Conduct complaints be noted.