

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Monday, 9 October 2017

PRESENT: Councillor Suresh Patel (Chair); Councillor Brian Oldham (Deputy Chair); Councillors Alan Bottwood, Andrew Kilbride, Brian Markham, Les Marriott, Cathrine Russell and Zoe Smith and Kim Holland, Co-Optee (Independent Member)

1. APOLOGIES

There were none.

At this point, the Chair welcomed Kim Holland, Co-Optee (Independent Member) to the Standards Committee.

2. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2017 as a true and accurate record.

3. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Alan Bottwood declared a personal interest as a Parish Councillor for Duston Parish Council.

5. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

There were none.

6. RECRUITMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER(S) CO-OPTEE(S) TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Standards Committee was apprised of the applications and recent interviews that had taken place for the vacancy of co-optee to the Committee – Independent Member.

The Chair advised that three interviews had been held for the role of Independent Member Co-Optee. The Standards Working Group had felt that just one of the applicants (Applicant A) met the criteria for the role of Independent Member Co Optee; it did not recommend the other applicants for the vacancies. It was suggested that Applicant A is offered the role of Independent Member Co-Optee to the Standards Committee.

Resolved: That:

- (1) Applicant A is offered the role of Independent Member Co-Optee to the Standards Committee.

7. DRAFT COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

The Standards Committee was asked to consider adopting a Communications Strategy in relation to Ethical and Governance Matters for all Councillors.

The draft Communications Strategy in relation to Ethical and Governance Matters was considered by the Standards Working Group (Work Plan) at its meeting on 2 October 2017. The Working Group felt that the draft Strategy was wide-ranging and supported all topics included within it.

- RESOLVED:
- 1) That the Communications Strategy – Ethical and Governance Matters for all Councillors is approved.
 - 2) That The Borough Secretary is instructed to make arrangements for the promotion of Communications Training Strategy in relation to Ethical and Governance Matters.

8. STATISTICS

The Standards Committee considered the report that detailed the statistical data in relation to Code of Conduct Arrangements complaints.

In discussing the data, the Committee asked for further statistics to be presented to its next meeting regarding the complaints, such as the time taken to resolve the complaints and the outcomes of each complaint.

The Code of Conduct Arrangements is scheduled to be an agenda item at the next meeting of the Standards Committee also.

It was queried whether Councillors should complete a DBS form.

- RESOLVED:
- (1) That the statistics in relation to the number of complaints received, and dealt with, in respect of the Code of Conduct Arrangements is noted.
 - (2) That further information on the statistical data, in relation to the number of complaints received, and dealt with, in respect of the Code of Conduct Arrangements is presented to the Committee at its next meeting in December 2017.
 - (3) That statistical data, in relation to the number of complaints received, and dealt with, in respect of the Code of Conduct Arrangements is presented to the Committee on an annual basis.

9. STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

The Standards Committee Work Plan for 2017 – 2018 was noted.

RESOLVED: That:

- (1) The Standards Work Plan for 2017 -2018 is noted.

The meeting concluded at 5:17 pm