

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Monday, 19 December 2016

PRESENT: Councillor Suresh Patel (Chair); Councillor Brian Oldham (Deputy Chair);
Councillors Brian Markham, Les Marriott, Niles Parekh, Cathrine Russell
and Zoe Smith

1. APOLOGIES

There were none.

2. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting held on 21 December 2015 as a true and accurate record.

3. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

5. TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS - MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT AND REGISTER OF INTERESTS

The Standards Committee received an update on recent Councillor training – Members Code of Conduct and Register of Interest.

RESOLVED:

That the report is noted.

6. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The Standards Committee received a briefing on the Whistleblowing Policy.

The Committee asked questions, made comment and heard:

- The Whistleblowing Policy is due to be reviewed.
- In response to a query regarding anonymous whistleblowing, the Standards Committee was advised that if the culture of the organisation is right, individuals will put their name to a complaint.
- A Whistleblowing log is kept and the majority of complaints are anonymous. There has been very few over the last year.
- The Standards Committee commented on the use of an external organisation to deal with whistleblowing; acknowledging the success of using an external organisation elsewhere. The Committee felt it was useful for external organisations to deal with whistleblowing.
- It is important for the Standards Committee is involved in the monitoring and review of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure

Resolved:

That the report is noted.

7. WORKPLAN FOR THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Standards Committee was asked to consider adopting a Work Plan for the Standards Committee for 2017/2018.

It was suggested that a Working Group is set up to consider Ethics, Governance and Governance issues for inclusion within the Work Plan. The Working Group would develop the list of suggested issues as presented in the report and add any further items as appropriate. The draft Work Plan would then be presented to the Standards Committee at its meeting on 20 March 2017 for approval.

Membership of the Working Group (*Work Plan for the Standards Committee*) would comprise Councillors Patel, Oldham, B Markham and Smith.

Resolved:

The Working Group (*Work Plan for the Standards Committee*) to develop a draft Work Plan for the Standards Committee and present it to the meeting of the Standards Committee on 20 March 2017 for approval.

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

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 5:27 pm