

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

4 July 2016

Present:-

Councillors C Chugg, P Colthorpe, G Gribble, R Hill, R Hodgins, A Mayes and R Saltmarsh

Apologies:-

Councillors A Moulding, A Connett, J Mathews, S Day and V Sullivan

1 **Chairman**

RESOLVED that Councillor Gribble be elected Chairman for the meeting.

2 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2016 be signed as a correct record.

3 **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

The Chairman reported that condolences had been conveyed, on behalf of the Council and this Committee, to Mr Sullivan and his wife following the recent loss of a close family member.

4 **Customer Feedback Monitoring Report**

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Business Strategy and Support Services ([BSS/16/8](#)) on levels of customer feedback (including compliments, representations and complaints) received and handled by the Council in 2015/16, outlining movements, variations and comparisons within and between service areas over the course of the year and the Council's performance in responding to that feedback.

Members noted that, overall, there had been around 26% fewer instances of 'feedback' received by the Council across the various categories in comparison with the previous year with, in particular, just under 9% fewer complaints received. Complaints received direct from the Local Government Ombudsman had however increased from 77 to 130 (+68%).

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Gribble, **SECONDED** by Councillor Chugg, and

RESOLVED that the Report be noted.

5 **Ethical Governance Framework: Monitoring**

The Committee received the report of the County Solicitor ([CS/16/23](#)) summarising feedback from Co-opted Members of this Committee on their attendance at meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees since the previous meeting monitoring compliance by Members and Officers with the Council's ethical governance framework. The Committee also noted, separately, a report of members' attendance at the Devon Education Forum.

The Committee were pleased to note that there had been no areas of significant concern or any indication of actions or behaviours that might be felt to have resulted in a potential breach of the Code, acknowledging also that steps would continue to be taken to address practical and procedural matters in light of Member's comments arising from both this and the previous monitoring reports in future training sessions, as appropriate.

6 **Local Determination of Complaints**

The County Solicitor reported that, since the last meeting, two complaints concerning alleged breaches of the Members Code of Conduct had been received relating, variously, to Councillors failing to act in the best interests of the public, to declare all relevant interests and to treat others with courtesy and respect.

Following an initial assessment of the complaints and consultation with an Independent Persons appointed by the Council it had been agreed that no further action should be taken on either complaint on the basis that either there had been no material breach of the code to warrant further investigation or that the allegations would not be a breach of the Code of Conduct and, accordingly, could not therefore be investigated.

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 2.15 pm and finished at 2.56 pm