

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

7 July 2020

Present:-

Councillors R Bloxham and A Connett and Mr I Hipkin

* **85** **Meeting Procedures - Briefing and Etiquette**

The Committee and attendees received a presentation from the Head of Democratic Services on the process and etiquette for remote meetings.

* **86** **Appointment of Chair**

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Connett, **SECONDED** by Mr Hipkin, and
RESOLVED that Councillor Bloxham be appointed as Chair.

* **87** **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

* **88** **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Bloxham, **SECONDED** by Councillor Connett, and

RESOLVED: that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Act namely, information relating to an individual and information likely to reveal the identity of an individual and in accordance with Section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, by virtue of the fact that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

* **89** **Allegation of Breach of Members Code of Conduct**

The Deputy County Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer presented the Assessment Sub-Committee with the following documentation;

- Constitution - Part 6a (Code of Personal Conduct) Members Code of Conduct;
- Guidance/Procedural Note for the Assessment Determination of Allegations of Breaches of the Code of Conduct for Members;
- Initial Complaint;
- Comments from the Independent Person; and
- The Subject Member's response to the complaint;

relating to a complaint received on an alleged breach of the Members Code of Conduct.

The Sub-Committee considered all of the documentation referred to above with a view to determining whether or not, on the basis of the evidence available, it agreed that there should be a formal investigation of the complaint or whether they would wish to pursue or agree some other course of action.

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The Sub Committee noted the views of the Independent Person and their recommendation that the issue of whether a full investigation was required be considered and determined by the Assessment Sub Committee.

The Committee debated the content of the complaint at length, in particular the reference to three social media posts which had been posted.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Bloxham, **SECONDED** by Councillor Connett, and

RESOLVED

(a) that the documentation and views of the Independent Person be noted;

(b) that the Sub Committee ask the Deputy County Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer to further investigate the reference to sponsorship contained in the second social media post and bring a Report back to a meeting of the Standards Committee. That same Report should also make reference to the first social media post and ask the Standards Committee to consider both issues and determine whether there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct and if so, any course of action it feels appropriate; and

(c) that the Assessment Sub Committee determine that no further action be taken in relation to the third social media post referenced in the complaint.

*(in line with the Procedure agreed under Standards Minute *18, Mr Hipkin asked that his support for the approved resolution be recorded)*