

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Standards Committee held in the Wantsum Room - Sessions House on Wednesday, 29 July 2015.

PRESENT: Mr L B Ridings, MBE (Chairman), Mr D S Daley, Mrs E D Rowbotham and Mrs P A V Stockell (Substitute for Mrs A D Allen, MBE)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr G Wild (Director of Governance and Law) and Mr P D Wickenden (Democratic Services Manager (Members))

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

9. Membership Change - Mrs E Rowbotham for Mr W Scobie

(Item 1)

The Committee noted that Mrs E Rowbotham had replaced Mr W Scobie on the Committee.

10. Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2013

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2013 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

11. Changes to the Hearing Panel Procedure for an alleged Breach of Misconduct by an Elected Member

(Item 5)

(1) At its meeting on 19 July 2012, the County Council approved the Kent Code of Conduct for elected Members, which came into operation retrospectively on 1 July 2012.

(2) Since the introduction of the Code, the Monitoring Officers had met on a regular basis to review its operation and to recommend any amendments if necessary.

(3) The Code is backed up by the operational arrangements agreed by the local authorities. Part of these operational arrangements refer to the hearing procedure which would be invoked should a complaint of alleged misconduct by an elected Member reach this stage.

(4) The Committee noted that the Monitoring Officers had recently met and agreed some minor amendments to the Hearing Panel which was appended to the report for the Committees approval.

(5) It had also been agreed at a recent meeting of the Monitoring Officers that an elected Member should declare under that part of the form headed 'employment' that

they are an elected Member of the County Council as well as any other local authority .

(6) RESOLVED that

(a) the amendments to the Hearing Panel Procedure in the operational arrangements for the Kent Code of Conduct for elected Members be approved; and

(b) elected Members be invited to declare their membership of any local authority on their declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form.

12. Kent Monitoring Officers - Mutual Assistance Protocol

(Item 6)

(1) The Kent Monitoring Officers (KMOs) agreed in 2012 a protocol to enhance the arrangements for the co-operation between Kent Monitoring Officers that allows for the creation of a cost effective and expeditious system whereby KMOs offer assistance to each other where, by reason of actual or likely conflicts of interest, non-availability, natural justice, or other reasons a Monitoring Officer is unable to carry out their functions with the Authority.

(2) The Protocol was agreed by all the district local authorities in Kent as well as Medway Council and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley.

(3) The Director of Law and Governance had been signatory to the Protocol on behalf of the County Council.

(4) Attached to the report was a copy of the Protocol with some suggested amendments as agreed by the KMOs.

(5) RESOLVED that the Mutual Assistance Protocol as amended be endorsed.