

SPECIAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of a Standards Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in Chamber Suite 3, The Arc, Clowne on Monday 8th September 2014 at 1400 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members: - Councillors M. Crane, H.J. Gilmour and G.O. Webster.

Cooptee Members: - J. Yates and R. J. Jaffray.

Officers: S.E.A. Sternberg (Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer), M. Kane (Governance Manager) and A. Bluff (Governance Officer).

J. Yates in the Chair.

0306. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Wallis and D.S. Watson

0307. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

0308. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

0309. MINUTES – 8TH APRIL 2014

Moved by Councillor H. J. Gilmour, seconded by Councillor G.O. Webster
RESOLVED that the minutes of a Standards Committee meeting held on 8th April 2014 be agreed as a true record.

0310. MINUTES – 3RD JULY 2014

Moved by Councillor H. J. Gilmour, seconded by Councillor G.O. Webster
RESOLVED that the minutes of a Special Standards Committee meeting held on 3rd July 2014 be agreed as a true record.

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0311. LGIU POLICY BRIEFING – ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR PROVIDERS OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Members considered a report of the Monitoring Officer to advise Committee of a recent report by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) around ethical standards for providers of public services.

CSPL was an independent advisory body which monitored, reported and made recommendations to the government on all issues relating to standards in public life; promoting high ethical standards and that the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life underpinned all aspects of public life.

The body of the report set out the findings from the research commissioned by CSPL from Ipsos MORI, with users, providers and commissioners of public services, 'to test the expectations and assurance of ethical standards in the public service market', given that 'public services were increasingly being delivered from those outside the public sector'.

The report made recommendations with regard to ensuring that a framework was in place so that ethical considerations were mainstreamed into commissioning processes and though aimed primarily at central government, the report was very relevant to local government given the sheer scale of outsourcing in local authorities.

It was noted that although the Council had few outside services, for example, recycling, the ethical standards would be relevant to all providers of services to the Council.

A short discussion took place.

It was agreed that the report should be presented to the Council's Scrutiny Committees also.

Moved by Councillor H. J. Gilmour, seconded by Councillor G.O. Webster
RESOLVED that (1) the report from the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) around ethical standards for providers of public services be noted,

(2) the report be presented to the Council's three Scrutiny Committees

(Governance Manager/Scrutiny Officer)

0312. ETHICS IN PRACTICE – PROMOTING ETHICAL CONDUCT IN PUBLIC LIFE

Members considered a report of the Monitoring Officer to advise Committee of a recent report by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) around ethical standards for providers of public services in relation to induction.

When Lord Nolan first set out the Seven Principles of Public Life in 1995, he also set out three 'common threads' for ensuring that those Principles were properly

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understood and followed; Codes of Conduct, Independent Scrutiny, and Guidance and Education. He was clear that an essential part of the necessary guidance and education on ethical standards was induction training.

The CSPL report revisited the subject of ethics in induction and noted good practice, highlighted areas where standards were at risk and identified where improvements could be made to embed ethical standards more effectively.

From the evidence assessed by the CSPL, induction was an essential and effective means of heightening the awareness of the Seven Principles of Public Life and building a real understanding of what the Codes of Conduct mean in practice so that public office holders were aware of the standards expected of them. Leadership was crucial to the effectiveness of the induction processes.

The Governance Manager noted that induction training was carried out with all Members of the Council and this would continue in 2015 after the District and Parish Council elections with the report being taken into consideration at those induction sessions.

Members agreed that the report was important and that the Council had a high profile in relation to ethical standards thanks to the Chair of Standards Committee.

It was further noted that the Member Development Working Group had taken a lot of topics forward especially for Member induction.

Moved by Councillor H. J. Gilmour, seconded by Councillor G.O. Webster
RESOLVED that the report from the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) around ethical conduct in public life be noted.

0313. TRAINING FOR OFFICERS ON GOVERNANCE

The Governance Manager circulated copies of a slide presentation to the meeting in relation to training for officers on the Council's Constitution.

The Council's Constitution had recently been revised which included amendments made to the Codes and Protocols and Gifts and Hospitality sections and it was prudent to bring these changes to officers' attention. This would be done via two training sessions for officers on 29 October and 3 November. The training would also be made available to Members.

The Chair noted that the two Cooptee Members of Standards Committee should also be invited to the training.

A short discussion took place and a Member requested a detailed training session be held for Members regarding delegated powers.

The Chair thanked the Governance Manager for the work he had carried out to provide the information to the meeting.

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The Monitoring Officer requested that any further comments from Members be directed to the Governance Manager.

Moved and seconded

RESOLVED that:

- (1) The slides for the officer training sessions on the Constitution be noted.
- (2) A similar session for Members be undertaken, to include detail about the new delegation scheme, with an invitation for the two co-opted members to attend.

(Governance Manager)

0314. MEMBER COMPLAINTS

The Monitoring Officer noted that as there had been no further complaints received against Members since the last meeting held in April, it was proposed that this agenda item would be presented as a verbal update to future meetings unless a number of complaints arose.

Moved and seconded

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 1422 hours.