

SPECIAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of a Special Standards Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in Chamber Suite 3, The Arc, Clowne on Friday 27th March 2015 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members: - Councillors H.J. Gilmour and D.S. Watson.

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.

0948. APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received from Councillor S. Wallis.

0949. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

0950. REPORT OF INSPECTION OF ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

At its meeting held on 2nd March 2015, Members had agreed that a special meeting of Standards Committee be arranged as soon as possible so Members could extract the relevant issues for Bolsover from the Rotherham Inspection Report and present the outcomes to the three Scrutiny Committees and also Licensing Committee.

A Member felt that to enable Licensing Committee Members to make balanced decisions regarding Licensing applications, an additional heading, 'Risk to the Public', should be included on all Licensing Committee reports. Licensing Committee Members should also receive training on what constituted a 'fit and proper person' to hold a hackney carriage/private hire vehicle drivers licence and the training include advice for Members where a Licensing applicant had a court case pending.

It was further suggested that all Members of the Council receive awareness training in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation.

In relation to Scrutiny Committees, it was suggested that an item for discussion be included on the Annual Scrutiny Conference agenda that scrutiny processes at Bolsover were reviewed annually to ensure that Scrutiny stayed strong.

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A Member felt that it was also good practice to allow opposition Members to chair/lead on committees which currently did not happen at Bolsover and in her view this encouraged complacency.

Referring to the Rotherham Report in relation to Members being overly reliant on officers, a Member raised if that could be the case at Bolsover and also, should Bolsover Members have CRB checks carried out if there were elements of their role of Councillor that may require it.

The Monitoring Officer replied that at Rotherham Council, CRB checks had been carried out in relation to Members who were in fostering and adoption roles though this could be a recommendation to consider at Bolsover.

A lengthy discussion took place.

Members felt strongly that Bolsover should ensure that its taxi licensing procedure was robust.

Moved by Councillor D.S. Watson, seconded by Councillor H.J. Gilmour

RECOMMENDED that (1) reports to Licensing Committee include reference to the likely risks to the public,

(2) Licensing Committee Members receive training on what constitutes a 'fit and proper person' to hold a hackney carriage/private hire vehicle drivers licence and the training include advice for Members where a Licensing applicant has a court case pending,

(3) all Members of the Council receive awareness training on Child Sexual Exploitation,

(4) the Annual Scrutiny Conference agenda includes an item for discussion that Scrutiny Members annually review their scrutiny processes at Bolsover to ensure that Scrutiny stayed strong.

(Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer/Governance Manager)

0951. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

Committee's approval was sought that a recommendation be made to Council for delegated authority to be given to the Monitoring Officer to amend the following items in the Council's Constitution;

- Terms of Reference for the three new Scrutiny Committees:-
 - ❖ Growth Scrutiny Committee (covering the Growth Corporate Plan Aim),
 - ❖ Customer Services and Transformation Scrutiny Committee (covering the Customer Service and Transformation Corporate Plan Aims) and

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- ❖ Healthy, Safe, Clean and Green Communities Scrutiny Committee (covering the Healthy, Safe, Clean and Green Communities Corporate Plan Aim).
- New Public Contract Regulations regarding public sector procurement (legal aspects),
- Draft Functions and Responsibilities (what is a Cabinet function and what is a Council function),
- Electronic Communications Orders (regarding information which Members receive electronically etc).
- Local Government (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015

Moved by Councillor H.J. Gilmour, seconded by Councillor D.S. Watson

RECOMMENDED that (1) Council approve delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to amend/include the following items in the Council's Constitution;

(2) Terms of Reference for the three new Scrutiny Committees:-

- Growth Scrutiny Committee (covering the Growth Corporate Plan Aim),
- Customer Services and Transformation Scrutiny Committee (covering the Customer Service and Transformation Corporate Plan Aims) and
- Healthy, Safe, Clean and Green Communities Scrutiny Committee (covering the Healthy, Safe, Clean and Green Communities Corporate Plan Aim).

(3) new Public Contract Regulations regarding public sector procurement (legal aspects),

(4) draft Functions and Responsibilities (what is a Cabinet function and what is a Council function),

(5) electronic Communications Orders (regarding information which Members receive electronically etc).

(6) Local Government (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

(Monitoring Officer/Governance Manager)

The Chair stated that he wished to thank the Leader and Deputy Leader for all their support and also Members of the Standards Committee over the previous 12 months.

The meeting concluded at 1115 hours.