

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Monday, 12 May 2025 at 14:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

R. Jaffray in the Chair

Councillors Jane Yates (Vice-Chair), Anne Clarke, Louise Fox, Justin Gilbody, Duncan Haywood and Tom Kirkham.

Officers:- Jim Fieldsend (Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer and Angelika Kaufhold (Governance and Civic Manager).

STA31-24/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

STA32-24/25 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There was no urgent business to be considered at the meeting.

STA33-24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

STA34-24/25 MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Duncan Haywood and seconded by Councillor Louise Fox
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held on 27th January 2025 be approved as a true and correct record.

STA35-24/25 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE 2024/25

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Monitoring Officer relating to the Annual Report of the Standards Committee for the 2024/25 Municipal Year. The report summarised the activities for the year and members were advised that the section on training needed to be updated prior to submission to Annual Council.

Moved by Councillor Jane Yates and seconded by Councillor Louise Fox and
RESOLVED that the Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2024/25 be approved.

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STA36-24/25 PROPOSAL TO DISESTABLISH THE EMPLOYMENT & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Monitoring Officer which proposed the disestablishment of the Employment and Personnel Committee. The Monitoring Officer advised that the main purpose of the committee was to deal with issues relating to the Council's establishment structure and employees. This added a layer of bureaucracy to the process as Council had to approve any proposals to changes to the establishment where there was a budgetary implication or there was no budget for the post(s).

The Chief Executive Officer also had delegated power to determine staffing matters as detailed in 1.2 of the report excepting those relating to Directors, Assistant Directors and Statutory Officers. This overlapped with the decision making powers of the Employment and Personnel Committee but in both cases any decisions requiring budgetary increase had to be approved by Council. The proposal to disestablish the committee would therefore remove the requirement for this unnecessary stage as staffing decisions not requiring additional budget could be made by the Chief Executive Officer.

In response to Councillor Tom Kirkham's question as to whether staffing decisions taken by the Chief Executive Officer would also be reported to Council the Monitoring Officer confirmed there was no proposal to report these to Council and that delegated decisions were published on the Council's website.

Moved by Councillor Duncan Haywood and seconded by Councillor Tom Kirkham and **RESOLVED** to recommend the disestablishment of the Employment and Personnel Committee to Council.

STA37-24/25 PROPOSED AMENDMENT(S) TO THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION FOR OFFICERS

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Monitoring Officer which proposed a change to his delegation to enable him to make non-substantive administrative changes to the Constitution.

The Monitoring Officer advised that whilst he currently had powers to make changes arising from new legislation, administrative errors or conflicts in interpretation, he could not make minor changes arising from administrative changes to the Constitution.

Members were advised of the following typographic errors in the report:

- paragraph 2.2 which should read "...of the delegation to the Monitoring Officer" and not Strategic Director of Service;
- paragraph 3.1 should read "delegate the ability to make decisions more efficient"; and
- paragraph 4.1 should read "Not to agree the delegation. This is not recommended as it would slow down the process to make administrative changes".

Councillor Tom Kirkham asked for an example of these type of changes and the Monitoring Officer cited there could be changes in the functions and roles of Directors or

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officers which could not currently be updated during reviews. It was purely about enabling the tidying up of the constitution and not allocation of new powers.

Moved by Councillor Duncan Haywood and seconded by Councillor Louise Fox and **RESOLVED** that Council be recommended to approve the proposed amendment to the Scheme of Delegation.

STA38-24/25 COMPLAINTS UPDATE

The Monitoring Officer provided an update on the complaints received in 2024/25 and stated that there had been an increase on complaints in comparison to previous years with most relating to parish councillors. Many complaints had been dealt with and were either not a complaint which should be considered through the Members Complaint process or were resolved informally by means of apologies or councillors agreeing to undertake training. One complaint was formally investigated and reported back to the last meeting.

Councillor Jane Yates sought clarification in relation to the 3 ongoing complaints and timescales as one dated back to May. The Monitoring Officer stated there had been difficulties in sourcing officers to undertake complaints investigations but he was now able to progress the complaint investigation which dated back to May 2024. There were also a couple of recent complaints which would be referred for investigation.

Councillor Tom Kirkham requested an update on the two complaints which had no information and the Monitoring Officer confirmed that he had agreed with the complainants that he would speak to the councillor concerned about the matter.

STA39-24/25 MEMBER TRAINING ATTENDANCE 2024/25

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Monitoring Officer who summarised members attendance at training events during 2024/25. It was suggested that members were not attending the level of training they should. The Monitoring Officer also confirmed that a Member Development Champion would be appointed at Council and that he was planning to discuss training participation and how members could be more fully engaged with them.

During discussion members made the following comments:

- Councillor Louise Fox asked whether there could a rolling training schedule which also highlighted when refresher training was required. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that refresher training was already planned for Planning and that it was an option for consideration.
- Councillor Gilbody confirmed that there had been a good notice period provided for the recent training events which all took place on the same day and this was useful for members who worked to plan and take time off to attend.
- Councillor Jane Yates added that not all training necessitated annual refreshers and the one full day training in March had worked well. Similar events including a variety of training on the same day may be preferable going forward.

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- Councillor Anne Clarke stated that members on Licensing Committee had to complete training to sit on the sub committees and currently only 60% of members had attended which limited the number of members who could sit on these committees. This meant reliance on a small number of councillors who were regularly be called upon for the sub committees.
- Councillor Jane Yates asked whether training for Planning and Licensing could be provided in the evening to increase participation. The Monitoring Officer suggested that it could be possible to provide this in an afternoon session and one in the evening.
- Councillor Anne Clarke suggested providing more training online rather than in person attendance may encourage a higher take up.
- In response to Councillor Justin Gilbody's question as to whether training should be mandatory. This already applied to Members Code of Conduct and Planning which were mandatory.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that members' comments would be shared with the Member Development Champion when reviewing training options for 2025/26.

Moved by Councillor Louise Fox and seconded by Councillor Anne Clarke **RESOLVED** that the information and statistics for Member attendance at training for the 2024/25 be noted.

STA40-24/25 WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

Consideration was given to the Standards Committee Work Programme and the Monitoring Officer confirmed that a new programme based on the reduced number of committees for 2025/26 would be developed. Additional meetings could be called in the event of any requests for dispensations etc.

The meeting concluded at 14:24 hours.