

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 13th November 2023 at 14:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

R. Jaffray in the Chair

Councillors Clive Moesby (Vice-Chair), Anne Clarke, Louise Fox, Justin Gilbody, Catherine Tite and Jane Yates.

Officers:- Amy Bryan (Governance and Civic Manager).

STA20-23/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

STA21-23/24 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

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

STA22-23/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or other interests, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

STA23-23/24 MINUTES

Moved by Councillor Jane Yates and seconded by Councillor Anne Clarke

RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held on 11th September 2023 be approved as a true and correct record.

STA24-23/24 CUSTOMER SERVICE COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS REPORT AND ANNUAL SUMMARY 2022/23

The Committee considered the Customer Service Compliments, Comments and Complaints report and annual summary 2022/23. The report provided information on the Council's performance in relation to its Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints, including the effective management of complaints and customer requests which was central to excellent customer service. The report also set out the number of Compliments, Comments and Complaints for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

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The Committee considered the report and requested information regarding why stage 2 and stage 3 complaints were responded to outside of the standard timescale.

Further information was also requested for services that were now managed by Dragonfly, compared to when they were Council services. Detail was also requested on Repairs as it appeared to be a large percentage of the figures in most categories.

Moved by Councillor Catherine Tite and seconded by Councillor Anne Clarke

RESOLVED that the overall performance on the Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints, be noted.

STA25-23/24 PUBLIC FACE OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE - INTOUCH ARTICLE

The Committee considered a report which set out a proposed article to be published in the Council's InTouch magazine. The report explained that one of the roles of the Standards Committee was to increase the public awareness of the Code of Conduct and its application. This could be achieved through the use of the Council's communication media. One such channel was the InTouch magazine which was delivered quarterly to homes and businesses across the District.

The proposed article, which was attached to the report at Appendix 1, explained the standards regime and summarised the Code of Conduct. It was proposed that the article would be included within the January edition.

The Committee agreed that the article read well and was informative. The Committee also discussed the need for all Councillors to be trained on the Code of Conduct and that elected officials should be aware of the office they held and the need for appropriate conduct at all times.

Moved by Councillor Catherine Tite and seconded by Councillor Louise Fox

RESOLVED that the article, as described in the report, be placed in the Council's InTouch magazine, subject to any amendments that the Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer considered necessary.

STA26-23/24 COUNCILLOR COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The Committee considered a report which reviewed the Councillor Complaint Procedure. The Councillor Complaint Procedure, with proposed changes, was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report stated that as well as some minor amendments there was also a more substantive change proposed. Under the existing procedure once a complaint had been investigated a complaint could be dealt with informally or by way of a hearing. Before determining that a formal hearing was not required the Monitoring Officer was essentially required to seek approval from the complainant. This meant that where the Monitoring Officer did not believe that a formal hearing was appropriate a complainant could still force a hearing to take place. This took away the discretion of the Monitoring Officer and put disproportionate control in the hands of the complainant. The proposed change addressed this imbalance and gave the Monitoring Officer the discretion to refer a

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complaint for a formal hearing. This change was in line with guidance issued by the Local Government Association.

Moved by Councillors Justin Gilbody and seconded by Councillor Louise Fox
RESOLVED that the Councillors Complaints Procedure be amended, as set out in the report.

STA27-23/24 COMPLAINTS UPDATE

The Committee considered the complaints update regarding complaints submitted against both Parish and District Councillors. It was noted that there were currently no outstanding complaints.

STA28-23/24 WORK PROGRAMME 2023/2024

The Committee considered its work programme for the remainder of the 23/24 municipal year.

The meeting concluded at 14:18 hours.