

Standards Committee

Minutes



Date:	Tuesday, 20 January 2015
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes
Committee members:	Councillor David Donaldson (Chairman) Councillors Brenda Ackers, Keith Beckett <small>ISO</small> , David Chedd, Sue Fazackerley, Paul Hayhurst, Vivienne Willder
Independent Persons:	Mr B Horrocks and Mr R Ellwood
Officers:	Mark Towers, Tracy Morrison, Katharine McDonnell

1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and any personal or prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

There were no declarations on this occasion.

2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 8 October 2014 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

3. Substitute members

There were no substitutions on this occasion.

4. Exclusion of the Public

The Chairman noted there were no members of the public in attendance and as such no need to formally move into private session.

5. Code of Conduct Investigation – Councillor Fiddler

Ms Morrison advised members that a formal investigation had been instigated following a complaint made against Councillor Dr Trevor Fiddler.

The investigation had been undertaken by Mr Mark Towers, Deputy Monitoring Officer. His report outlined the allegation, background, evidence gathered, and other considerations. Mr Towers attended to introduce his report and assist members of the committee. His finding was that **Councillor Fiddler had not breached the code of conduct as to members by not declaring any interest in meetings he had attended relating to shale gas extraction prior to the Council meeting of 28th July 2014.**

Members had before them a full copy of the Investigatory Officers report.

Following a discussion, taking into regards the findings of the investigatory officer, the view of the Monitoring Officer and Councillor Fiddler's response to the findings, as reported by the Monitoring Officer and the Independent Person, the Committee RESOLVED:

1. To note the investigation report, finding no breach of the Code of Conduct on the part of Councillor Trevor Fiddler, and that the matter was formally closed;
2. To note the advice provided to Councillor Fiddler regarding the nature of his interest in the matter going forward; and
3. That due to the circumstances surrounding the complaint, it was in the interest of all parties to release the full investigation report for publication.

6. Code of Conduct Investigation – Councillor Speak

Ms Morrison advised members that a formal investigation had been instigated following a complaint made against Councillor Heather Speak.

The investigation had been undertaken by Mr Mark Towers, Deputy Monitoring Officer. His report outlined the allegation, background, evidence gathered, and other considerations. Mr Towers attended to introduce his report and assist members of the committee. His finding was that Councillor Speak had not breached the code of conduct as to members in how she had declared any interest arising at meetings relating to shale gas extraction prior to the Council meeting of 28th July 2014.

Members had before them a full copy of the Investigatory Officers report.

Following a discussion, taking into regards the findings of the investigatory officer, the view of the Monitoring Officer and Councillor Speak's response to the findings, as reported by the Monitoring Officer and the Independent Person, the Committee RESOLVED:

1. To note the investigation report, finding no breach of the Code of Conduct on the part of Councillor Heather Speak, and that the matter was formally closed;
2. To note the advice provided to Councillor Speak regarding the nature of her interest in the matter going forward; and
3. That due to the circumstances surrounding the complaint, it was in the interest of all parties to release the full investigation report for publication.

7. Code of Conduct Investigation – Councillor Threlfall

Ms Morrison advised members that a formal investigation had been instigated following a complaint made against Councillor Thomas Threlfall.

The investigation had been undertaken by Mr Mark Towers, Deputy Monitoring Officer. His report outlined the allegation, background, evidence gathered, and other considerations. Mr Towers attended to introduce his report and assist members of the committee. His finding was that Councillor Threlfall had not breached the code of conduct as to members by not declaring any interest in meetings he had attended relating to shale gas extraction prior to the Council meeting of 28th July 2014.

Members had before them a full copy of the Investigatory Officers report.

Following a discussion, taking into regards the findings of the investigatory officer, the view of the Monitoring Officer and Councillor Threlfall's response to the findings, as reported by the Monitoring Officer and the Independent Person, the Committee RESOLVED:

1. To note the investigation report, finding no breach of the Code of Conduct on the part of Councillor Thomas Threlfall, and that the matter was formally closed;
2. To note the advice provided to Councillor Threlfall regarding the nature of his interest in the matter going forward; and

3. That due to the circumstances surrounding the complaint, it was in the interest of all parties to release the full investigation report for publication.

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