

**STANDARDS HEARINGS SUB-COMMITTEE**  
**16/04/2018 at 4.00 pm**



**Present:** Charles Bourne (Chair)  
Councillors Gloster and Moores

Also in Attendance:

Colin Brittain                      Head of Legal Services  
Liz Drogan                            Head of Constitutional Services

1                      **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

RESOLVED – That Charles Bourne be elected Chair for the duration of the meeting.

2                      **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

3                      **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they contain exempt information under paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and it would not, on balance, be in the public interest to disclose the reports.

4                      **ASSESSMENT OF STANDARDS COMPLAINT**

The Committee gave consideration to a report of the Director of Legal Services which requested Members to consider a complaint against a Member, that he had breached the Council's Members Code of Conduct. The Assistant Director of Legal Services set out the complaint, as detailed in the report, and outlined the criteria to be used by the sub-committee for deciding whether a complaint should be accepted for investigation, dealt with informally, or rejected.

The criteria considered in relation to the complaint was:

- Whether a substantially similar allegation had previously been made by the complainant to Standards for England, or the Standards Committee, or the complaint has been the subject of an investigation by another regulatory authority.
- Whether the complaint was about something that happened so long ago that those involved were unlikely to remember it clearly enough to provide credible evidence, or where the lapse of time meant there would be little benefit or point in taking action now;
- Whether the allegation was anonymous;
- Whether the allegation discloses a potential breach of the Code of Conduct, but the complaint was not serious enough to merit any action; and
  - The resources needed to investigate and determine the complaint were wholly disproportionate to the allegations; and



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- Whether in all the circumstances there was no overriding public benefit in carrying out an investigation.
- Whether the complaint appeared to be malicious, vexatious, politically motivated or tit for tat;
- Whether the complaint suggests that there was a wider problem throughout the Authority;
- Whether it was apparent that the subject of the allegation was relatively inexperienced as a Member or has admitted to making an error and the matter would not warrant a more serious sanction.

Members considered the detail of the complaint contained within the report and the options available to them.

RESOLVED – The complaint be progressed to an external investigation.

The meeting started at 4.00pm and finished at 4.15pm