

## **Standards Committee**

12 March 2018 – At a meeting of the Committee held at 2.15 p.m. at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Barnard (Chairman), Lt Col Barton, Mr Bradford, Mrs Jupp, Mr RJ Oakley, Mr Smytherman and Mrs Sparkes.

In attendance: Mr Cooper and Mr Donaldson (Independent Persons)

Absent: Mr Buckland and Mrs Duncton.

### **Declaration of Interest**

18. None declared.

### **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

19. Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 October 2017 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

### **Customer Relations Report**

20. The Committee received a presentation from Dave Loveman, the Customer Relations Manager (copy of slides appended to the signed minutes), which set out a new approach to recording and reporting on complaints received by the County Council. He confirmed that the new approach would improve consistency in reporting and would give a monthly overview, including more detail for individual services. Appeals processes would now be included, as well as complaints received by contractors.

21. The Committee welcomed the aim of getting greater consistency in reporting and the Customer Relations Manager's confirmation that an annual report would still be submitted to the Committee. He confirmed that reports covering 2016 and 2017 would be submitted to the Committee in June 2018.

22. In response to members' questions, the Customer Relations Manager confirmed that complaints information was shared with senior officers, who would usually brief their Cabinet Members on any trends or significant findings from complaints.

23. Resolved – That the report be noted and that annual reports from 2016 and 2017 be requested for consideration in June 2018.

### **Consultation on Ethical Standards in Local Government**

24. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Law and Assurance (copy appended to the signed minutes) which set out a possible response to the Committee for Standards in Public Life's consultation on ethical standards in Local Government.

25. The Committee generally supported the proposed response, supporting a proposal for a uniform code to be reintroduced, as it was possible for slightly different codes to be adopted by councils in the same area, which was difficult for members of more than one local authority. It also supported the proposal that the power of suspension of a member should be reintroduced.

26. Members discussed the current expectation that member home addresses should be published on the County Council website and noted that candidates could now ask for their addresses to be withheld on ballot papers for local government elections. It was agreed that a question on this subject should be included in the all member survey planned for April 2018. It also asked that information on safety for councillors that had been circulated to members after the election should be mentioned in the response.

27. Resolved –

- (1) That the draft response be supported, subject to strengthening the response to ask for a uniform code, the power to suspend a member to be reintroduced and to mention the safety advice circulated to members.
- (2) That a question be included in the forthcoming member survey about whether the expectation that all member home addresses should be published should remain.

### **Confidential Reporting Policy**

28. The Committee received a report from the Director of Law and Assurance (copy appended to the signed minutes) which advised of recent referrals received.

29. The Committee noted that contractors were now required to make staff aware of the Policy, as it was now available to them. There remained a low number of referrals under the Policy and outcomes would be reported in June 2018 if investigations were concluded by then.

30. Resolved – That the report be noted.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

31. The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting would be held at 2.15 p.m. on Monday 11 June 2018 at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 3.22 p.m.

Chairman