



**MINUTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
MONDAY 30 OCTOBER 2017**

Held at 6.00pm in  
Committee Room 1, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford

**PRESENT:**

Councillors R A Adair, K M Buckle, E J Lungley, S E Mallender, F A Purdue-Horan

Independent Members: G Norbury, K White

**OFFICERS PRESENT:**

Nigel Carter	Service Manager – Finance and Commercial and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Tracey Coop	Constitutional Services Officer
Glen O’Connell	Monitoring Officer

**Other Attendees:** J R Baggaley

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Councillor K Beardsall and Independent Member W A Wood

**5. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Purdue-Horan declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 4, Cases update 2017-18.

**6. Notes of the Previous Meeting**

Mr John Baggaley requested that it be recorded that he attends the Standards Committee as Rushcliffe Borough Council’s Independent Person for Standards Matters and is not a member of the Standards Committee.

**7. Cases Update 2017-18**

Councillor Purdue Horan who had declared an interest in this item left the meeting at this point.

The Monitoring Officer provided a report to update the Committee on the number of complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct. The report highlighted that since the last Committee meeting on 20 July, 2017 there had been a further 12 cases received, with each of these cases being dealt with by the Monitoring Officer giving due regards to the published Councillor Complaints Procedure, and where appropriate, the Independent Person had been consulted. The Monitoring Officer noted that after these initial assessments had been carried out, three of the cases had resulted in a decision to progress the complaint through the complaints procedure.

It was noted that during the year the Monitoring Officer had been available to provide support to questions raised by individuals and had also attended the Town and Parish Council Forum on 16 June, 2017 where the Monitoring Officer had made the offer to arrange meetings with Town and Parish Councillors in order to provide advice and guidance on standards matters. It was also noted that following the last meeting of this Standards Committee the Monitoring Officer was developing proposals for a programme of training and development for Town and Parish Chairmen and Clerks.

**It was RESOLVED that** the report of the Monitoring Officer be noted.

## 8. **Disqualification Criteria for Councillors – Government Consultation**

Councillor Purdue-Horan re-joined the meeting at this point.

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report to advise the committee on the current government consultation on proposed legislative changes to extend the criteria for disqualification of councillors. It was noted that the current disqualification criteria were contained in section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Monitoring Officer reported that the government were proposing some additional disqualifications criteria in relation to sexual offences and anti-social behaviour. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) were seeking the support of local authorities and responses to the consultation questions, as set out below by 8 December, 2017.

Q1 Do you agree that an individual who is subject to the notifications requirements set out in the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (i.e. is on the sex offenders register) should be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or London Mayor?

Q2. Do you agree that an individual who is subject to a Sexual Risk Order should not be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or the London Mayor?

Q3. Do you agree that an individual who has been issued with a Civil injunction (made under section 1 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014) or a Criminal Behaviour Order 9 made under section 22 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014) should be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a member of a local authority, mayor of a combined authority, member of the London Assembly or London Mayor?

Q4 Do you agree that being subject to a Civil Injunction or a Criminal Behaviour Order should be the only anti-social behaviour-related reasons why an individual should be prohibited from standing for election, or holding office, as a, member of a Local authority, mayor of a

combined authority, member of the London Assembly or London Mayor?

Q5. Do you consider that the proposals set out in this consultation paper will have an effect on local authorities discharging their Public Sector Equality Duties under the Equality Act 2010?

Q6. Do you have any further views about the proposals set out in this consultation paper?

The Committee considered the questions above and the implications these proposals might have for the Councils' Public Sector Equality Duties. The Committee established that any changes that contributed to an environment where there was a greater confidence that the election of Councillors and their ongoing behaviours were subject to additional safeguards would only enhance public confidence in councillors and candidates of office, and any impact the additional criteria would have would be positive. It was noted however that a potential area of controversy would be where anti-social behaviour injunctions and orders were imposed in respect of actions occurring within a politically contentious context. The Committee concluded that the quality and integrity of Councillors was essential to the effective functioning of the Council and that the proposed disqualifications would enhance public confidence.

**It was RESOLVED that** the Monitoring Officer submits a written response, incorporating the agreed views of the Standards Committee, to the DCLG Consultation on the 4. Disqualification Criteria for Councillors by 12 December, 2017.

#### 9. **Training and Development Programme for Town and Parish Chairmen and Clerks**

The Monitoring Officer provided a report for the Committee to consider and comment on the initial proposals in developing a training programme for Town and Parish Councils in the Borough. The Monitoring Officer advised that he intended at the next Town and Parish Forum, on the 9 November 2017 to provide some group work exercises in order to identify the key priorities for training and development. An understanding training and support provided through national bodies including the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLLC), and whilst not wishing to duplicate this provision to identify how the Council's in-house resources and external resources could potentially assist with this. It was noted that the group work would be facilitated to make sure that the real issues were identified and concerns previously discussed in the Standards Committee were considered.

The Monitoring Officer indicated that some of the issues likely to be of concern to Chairmen and Clerks were not unique to Local Government, for example in the charring meetings and dealing with differing and difficult personalities were common to most employment sectors. The Monitoring Officer noted that the Borough Council supported Town and Parish Councils via a variety of methods and the proposed programme should help Town and Parish Councils to perform their functions more effectively whilst further enhancing the relationship with the Borough Council.

The Committee considered what actions were needed to ensure the Town and Parish Council Chairmen and Clerks received and the support they required and welcomed the Monitoring Officer's proposals.

The Committee discussed the scheduling of future meetings of the Committee, and it was agreed that the Standards meetings should be scheduled quarterly in member's calendars starting from January, 2018. The Committee were also in agreement that meetings should be held on Monday evenings and would commence at 6.00pm.

**It was RESOLVED that**

- a) the Monitoring Officer email the Town and Parish Chairmen and Clerks in advance of the Town and Parish Forum to gather information on common issues and concerns.
- b) the Monitoring Officer uses the Town and Parish Forum to develop a training programme to provide the Town and Parish Councils with the support they need.
- c) Constitutional Services confirm future dates of the meetings of the Standards Committee with the Chairmen and advise the membership accordingly.

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm.

**Action Sheet**  
**STANDARDS COMMITTEE - MONDAY 30 OCTOBER 2017**

Minute Number	Actions	Officer Responsible
4	To submit a response to the Consultation questions required by DCLG by 12 December 2017	Monitoring Officer
5	Contact the Town and Parish Councils in advance of the Town and Parish forum to request information on issues and concerns	Monitoring Officer
5	Provide the initial group work for Town and Parish Clerks attending the Town and Parish Forum on the 9 November 2017, and develop a training programme.	Monitoring Officer
5	To arrange quarterly meetings of the Standards Committee commencing in January 2017	Constitutional Services in consultation with the Chairmen