

# EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Standards Committee held in the Coltman VC Room, Town Hall on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 6.30pm.

### **Present:**

Councillors L. Walker (Chairman), R. Lock and M. Shrive.

### **Officers Present:**

John Teasdale (Head of Legal and Regulatory Services and Monitoring Officer) and Daniel Caulkett (Democratic Services Officer)

### **Also Present:**

Helen Headech (Parish Council representative), John McKiernan (Parish Council representative), Graham Goodall (Independent Person) and Sarah Riches (Independent Person)

An apology for absence was received from: Councillor L. Beech

### 17/24 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest at the commencement of the meeting.

### 18/24 **PUBLIC MINUTES**

#### **Resolved:**

That the Public Minutes of the Meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 be approved by the Committee and signed as a correct record.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows.

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor L. Walker		
Councillor R. Lock		
Councillor M. Shrive		

### 19/24 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business submitted to the meeting pursuant to Rule 12.

20/24 **MONITORING OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT**

Members considered the report of the Monitoring Officer on the annual review of the arrangements for the discharge of the Monitoring Officer's duties and proposals for amendments.

The Monitoring Officer informed Members that they had given advice to a number of Councillors about their obligations under the Code of Conduct; and had given advice and support to a number of Parish Clerks.

The Monitoring Officer informed Members that they had received 4 Standards complaints since the last Annual Report in 2023, composing as follows:

- 3 complaints were from Parish Councillors, and one complaint from a Borough Councillor.
- 2 of the 4 complaints are still live.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed to members there were still one outstanding complaint which is currently being considered by an external investigator.

The Monitoring Officer reported that the Localism Act 2011 requires the Council (and Parish/Town Councils for which it is responsible) to adopt a Code of Conduct for Councillors. All relevant Council's had adopted the Codes of Conduct.

The Monitoring Officer also reported that all Members of the Borough Council had completed their declaration of interest forms, they are required to update their declarations at least annually even if no changes are required. They reported they had received updated declarations since throughout the year, which suggests there was a high level of awareness among Councillors of the need to notify any changes as they occur.

In terms of Parish/ Town Councillors, the Monitoring Officer informed members that declarations from members of Outwoods, Stapenhill and Yoxall Parish Councils are still outstanding. The Monitoring Officer has formally written to these Councils requesting the declarations.

An opportunity for questions followed.

**NOTED.**

21/24 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Resolved:**

That, in accordance with Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the Meeting during discussion of the following items as it would likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets before each item number on the Agenda

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows.

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor L. Walker Councillor R. Lock Councillor M. Shrive		