

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

23 SEPTEMBER 2020

PRESENT

Councillor K. Procter (in the Chair).

Councillors Miss L. Blackburn (Vice-Chair), D. Butt, Dr. S. Carr, G. Coggins, D. Jarman, P. Myers, L. Walsh, and D. Western

Independent Members Mr. D. Goodman, and Mr R. Brown

Independent Persons N. Jackson and Mr M. Whiting

In attendance

Jane Le Fevre

Monitoring Officer

Alexander Murray

Governance Officer

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B. Hartley, Councillor M. Minnis, Mr. C.E.J. Griffiths and Mr. A. Rudden.

16. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held 4 March 2020 be agreed as an accurate record.

17. CSPL 15 AREAS OF BEST PRACTICE - IMPACT OF COVID 19

The Chair noted that the majority of the actions had been completed and those that had not been completed had been delayed by the pandemic. The Council were to report their progress in November. The Monitoring Officer added that the changes to the constitution required to go to Council to be accepted and they were scheduled to go to Council in October 2020. The actions which related to Parish Councils had been delayed due to the difficulties in arranging to meet during the pandemic. The change related to the Annual Governance Statement had been moved back due to the deadline for completion the Statement had been moved back to November 2020.

Councillor Walsh noted the proposal to discuss how the Council would support the Parish Councils' and the Boundary review at the same meeting. The Councillor raised concern that those were two large items to cover in a single meeting and asked whether they could be covered in separately. An Independent Person agreed with the view expressed by Councillor Walsh. The Monitoring Officer responded that the approach would be reviewed to ensure adequate time was allotted to discuss each item.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the approach for discussing the support needs of Parish Councils' be reviewed to ensure a suitable amount of time is allocated.

18. LGA MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chair gave a brief overview of the report informing Members that the draft had been published by the LGA and that a final version was due to be published by the end of the year. Once published the final version would be reviewed alongside Trafford's Code before deciding which elements, if any, the Council would adopt. The Monitoring Officer added that the report had been circulated to give the Committee sight of the draft and to keep them updated on the progress of the creation of the Model Code.

Following the update Committee Members asked a number of questions relating to the inclusion of sanctions within the Draft Model Code, the level of sanctions proposed, and the differences between Trafford's Code and the Draft Model Code. The Monitoring Officer provided answers to the questions raised and assured the Committee that they would have further opportunity to go through the New Model Code in more detail once the final version became available.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

19. DISPENSATIONS TO THE 6 MONTH RULE

The Chair summarised the report informing Committee Members that the dispensation had been introduced in response to the Pandemic and the subsequent change to the time meetings were held, which had made it difficult for some members to attend. Three Councillors had received the dispensation since its implementation and agreement had been reached that upcoming Council meetings would be held outside of standard working hours, which would reduce the need to use the dispensation further. The Monitoring Officer added that the dispensation had avoided the Council having to hold additional Council meetings to discuss those Councillors who had been in breach of the six month rule. Changes had also been made to the way that absences were recorded to reflect the reasons why the Councillors were unable to attend rather than simply marking them as absent.

Following the summary Committee Members were given the opportunity to ask questions but none were raised.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

20. MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT

The Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that there was not a great deal to report. There had been a number of changes to the Council's procedures around meetings due to the Pandemic but there had very few general standards issues in the last six months. One allegation had been received and was in the early stages of the process.

Following the report Committee Members were given the opportunity to ask questions but none were raised.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Standards Committee (23.9.20)

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm and finished at 4.32 pm