



## Standards Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Thursday, 11 June 2015 at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

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**Councillors present:** Councillors I Amos, M Anderton, B Birch (Chairman), Moon, Lees (Vice-Chairman) and Michael Vincent.

**Officers present:**

Michael Ryan (Corporate Director, People and Places & Monitoring Officer), Mary Grimshaw (Senior Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer) and Roy Saunders (Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager).

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**1 Election of Chairman for 2015/16**

Councillor B Birch was elected Chairman of the Committee for 2015/16.

**2 Election of Vice-Chairman for 2015/16**

Councillor Lees was elected as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for 2015/16.

**3 Apologies for Absence**

The Chairman (Councillor B Birch) said that he had received apologies from Councillors Moon and Michael Vincent stating that they would be arriving slightly late.

**4 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**5 Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 November 2014 be confirmed as a correct record, subject to the substitution of the words "should have" for the word "had" in the first line of the third paragraph of Minute STA.16 (Code of Conduct Complaint – Reference 2014/07)

Councillor M Anderton said, with reference to Minute STA.16, that the Committee had been informed on 6 November that Councillor Murphy had apologised to all the Councillors involved in the situation which had been the subject of the complaint, but that had not been correct. He had not at that time apologised to all the Labour Councillors concerned, although she acknowledged that he had done so subsequently. She said that the facts should have been established and reported more clearly to the Committee.

Mr Ryan said in response to comments made by Councillor B Birch about minute STA.15 (Current Complaints: Summary). That he would arrange for the complaints procedure flowchart to be amended to refer to the Chairman of the Standards Committee being notified by the Monitoring Officer when complaints were received, as had been discussed at the meeting on 6 November 2015.

## **6 Independent Persons: Recruitment**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report providing information on the arrangements being made to recruit independent persons to be involved in the process for dealing with Councillors Code of Conduct Complaints and also in disciplinary procedures for statutory officers.

Mr Ryan informed the Committee that further to the position described in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the report, no applications had been received in response to the advertising campaign. However, the discussions held with South Ribble District Council had led to the independent person appointed by that Council indicating that he would also be willing to act in a similar capacity for Wyre. Assuming the discussions were concluded successfully he would submit a report to the next Council meeting recommending that that the independent person at South Ribble also be appointed as the independent person for Wyre.

**RESOLVED** that the current position be noted and that the Monitoring Officer's intended course of action be supported.

## **7 Current Complaints: Summary**

The Monitoring Officer submitted a schedule summarising complaints of alleged breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct which were currently being processed or had been completed since the last report to the Standards Committee.

Mr Ryan said in response to questions, that the most recent complaint had been received shortly after the elections in May and involved various allegations relating, in the main, to election matters.

The Monitoring Officer said, in response to further questions, that he would send an updated summary to all Members of the Committee providing more information about the reasons for rejecting the complaints on which no further action was to be taken.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted and the intention of the Monitoring Officer to provide further information to the Members of the Committee be welcomed.

**8            Date of next Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the next meeting of the Committee be held at 6.00pm on Thursday 5 November 2015.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 6.30 pm.