

Standards Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Thursday, 5 November 2015 at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

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

Officers present: Michael Ryan (Corporate Director, People and Places & Monitoring Officer) and Roy Saunders (Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager).

Barry Parsonage (Independent Person) was also present.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Michael Vincent and Mary Grimshaw (Senior Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer).

9 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

10 **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 June 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

11 **Independent Person: Recruitment**

The Monitoring Officer reported, further to the position reported at the last meeting of the Committee (Minute STA.6) that Barry Parsonage had been formally appointed as an independent person for ethical standards issues at the Council meeting held on 25 June 2015.

The Members of the Committee welcomed Mr Parsonage to the meeting.

Mr Parsonage said that he was pleased to return to Wyre and to see some familiar faces. He explained that he was performing the independent person role at South Ribble so was familiar with the requirements of the position and was looking forward to working with the Monitoring Officer and the Standards Committee at Wyre.

The Monitoring Officer also submitted a report on the proposed appointment of a second independent person.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the appointment of Barry Parsonage be welcomed.
- 2) That the intention to recommend to the Council meeting on 3 December 2015 that Helen Kay also be appointed as an independent person to perform the roles set out in appendix 1 be supported.

12 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.

The Monitoring Officer explained in more detail to the Members of the Committee the circumstances of the complaints referenced 2015/05 and 2015/06, referred to in the summary schedule. He also provided further information on complaint references 2015/07 and 2015/08 which had been received since the agenda for this meeting had been published, copies of which were circulated to Members of the Committee.

Mr Ryan said that he had arranged to meet next week with the independent person (Barry Parsonage) to consider the two most recent complaints, in accordance with the first stage of the complaints process. He said, in response to questions, that complaint reference 2015/08 related to the same parish/town council as complaint reference 2015/05 and 2015/06. He also said, in response to questions, that information would probably be sought from the Clerk of that Council as part of the initial process for considering the latest complaint. He would be happy, in future, to send out copies of any decision letters issued at the conclusion of the first stage of the complaints process to the Chairman of the Standards Committee at the same time as any such letters were sent to the complainant and the subject member.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

13 Date of next Meeting

RESOLVED that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee be held at 6.00pm on Thursday 17 March 2016.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 6.25 pm.