

## EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on Tuesday, 19 April 2016

### **Attendance list at the end of the document**

The meeting started at 10.00am and ended at 10.45am

- \*18 Public speaking  
There were no questions asked.
- \*19 Minutes  
The minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 26 January 2016, were confirmed and signed as a true record.
- \*20 Declarations of interest  
There were none.
- \*21 Thanks to Three Co-opted Non-Voting Members  
The Chairman wished to express his thanks to the three co-opted non-voting members, Councillor Courtney Richards, Ray Davison and Councillor David Mason who were standing down from the Standards Committee after many years of valuable service.
- \*22 Recording Councillor attendance at Committee meetings  
Members noted that at its 20 January 2015 meeting a serving councillor had asked the Committee to support the idea of publishing an annual report on Councillor attendance at Committee meetings. The report explored the practicality of the suggestion and what it may achieve, including the possibility of finding a suitable system for recording attendance, and the length of attendance.  
  
Members questioned whether further recording of Councillor attendance at Committee meetings, other than the attendance register was required and its purpose.

#### **RESOLVED:**

that no further action be taken on this matter and the status quo be retained; if a copy of the Councillor attendance register was requested then a photocopy be provided and to be charged for if appropriate.

- \*23 Complaint update  
The Committee considered and noted the report of the Monitoring Officer, which provided an update for the Committee on new Code related cases received since 1 May 2015.

A request was made that those making the complaint be named in the report. However, the Strategic Lead Legal, Licensing and Democratic Services (and Monitoring Officer) advised that this was not always possible when the complainant had requested to remain anonymous. In response to another question, he advised that the number of complaints received in previous years would be reported in the Annual Complaints' report when reported to the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

that the report be noted.

- \*24 Lobbying and Code of Good Practice for Officers and Councillors dealing with Planning Matters  
The Strategic Lead Legal, Licensing and Democratic Services (and Monitoring Officer) presented a report considering the issue of lobbying in respect of consideration of planning applications. This was an issue covered in the Code of Good Conduct Practice for Officers and Councillors dealing with planning matters. Members were asked to consider and to make any recommendations on whether any changes were required. Any recommended changes would be referred to Council to determine; if agreed by Council the Constitution would be updated accordingly.

In response to a question, the Strategic Lead Legal, Licensing and Democratic Services (and Monitoring Officer) advised that he would email all members clarifying when there was the need to declare interests as members of organisations, such as the National Trust and CPRE, particularly in respect of Development Management Committee meetings.

**RESOLVED:**

1. that the content of the report be endorsed;
2. that the Development Management Committee be reminded of the requirements on lobbying as set out in the Code of Good Practice for Officers and Councillors dealing with Planning Matters;
3. that the Strategic Lead Legal, Licensing and Democratic Services email all members to explain and clarify when, as members of other organisations, they are required to declare their interests.

- \*25 Forward Plan  
The Committee noted the contents of the forward plan and future meeting dates.

The following items would be included for consideration at the July meeting:

- Annual report
- Complaints update
- Forward Plan.

**Attendance list**

**Present:**

Councillors:

Stuart Hughes (Chairman)

Graham Godbeer

Douglas Hull

Dawn Manley

Co-opted non-voting members:

Cllr Courtney Richards, Co-opted Parish/Town Council member

Ray Davison, Co-opted Independent member

Cllr David Mason, Co-opted Parish/Town Council member

**Also present:**

Tim Swarbrick, Co-opted Independent member

**Councillors:**

Susie Bond – substitute Committee member

Roger Giles

Alan Dent – substitute Committee member

**Officers:**

Henry Gordon Lennox, Monitoring Officer and Strategic Lead - Legal, Licensing & Democratic Services

Anita Williams, Deputy Monitoring Officer and Principal Solicitor

Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer (minute \*20 only)

Chris Lane, Democratic Services Officer

Wendy Harris, PA to Strategic Lead Legal & Monitoring Officer

**Apologies:**

John Walpole, Independent Person

Pauline Stott

Alison Willan, Independent Person

Chairman ..... Date .....