

Notice of Standards Committee

Date: Tuesday, 16 April 2024 at 6.00 pm

Venue: HMS Phoebe, BCP Civic Centre, Bournemouth BH2 6DY



Membership:

Chairman:

Cllr V Ricketts

Vice Chairman:

Cllr A Chapmanlaw

Cllr S Armstrong
Cllr P Broadhead

Cllr E Connolly
Cllr B Nanovo

Cllr O Walters

Independent persons:

Mr P Cashmore

Mr I Sibley

Mr J Storey

All Members of the Standards Committee are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

The press and public are welcome to view the live stream of this meeting at the following link:

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=5601>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Democratic Services on 01202 096660 or email democratic.services@bcpCouncil.gov.uk

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office: Tel: 01202 118686 or email press.office@bcpCouncil.gov.uk

This notice and all the papers mentioned within it are available at democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk

GRAHAM FARRANT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

8 April 2024

**DEBATE
NOT HATE**



Available online and
on the Mod.gov app



Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

Declaring interests at meetings

Familiarise yourself with the Councillor Code of Conduct which can be found in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

Before the meeting, read the agenda and reports to see if the matters to be discussed at the meeting concern your interests



What are the principles of bias and pre-determination and how do they affect my participation in the meeting?

Bias and predetermination are common law concepts. If they affect you, your participation in the meeting may call into question the decision arrived at on the item.

Bias Test

In all the circumstances, would it lead a fair minded and informed observer to conclude that there was a real possibility or a real danger that the decision maker was biased?

Predetermination Test

At the time of making the decision, did the decision maker have a closed mind?

If a councillor appears to be biased or to have predetermined their decision, they must NOT participate in the meeting.

For more information or advice please contact the Monitoring Officer
(janie.berry@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Selflessness

Councillors should act solely in terms of the public interest

Integrity

Councillors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships

Objectivity

Councillors must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

Accountability

Councillors are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

Openness

Councillors should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing

Honesty & Integrity

Councillors should act with honesty and integrity and should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned

Leadership

Councillors should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

AGENDA

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence from Members.

2. Substitute Members

To receive information on any changes in the membership of the Committee.

Note – When a member of a Committee is unable to attend a meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee, the relevant Political Group Leader (or their nominated representative) may, by notice to the Monitoring Officer (or their nominated representative) prior to the meeting, appoint a substitute member from within the same Political Group. The contact details on the front of this agenda should be used for notifications.

3. Declarations of Interests

Councillors are requested to declare any interests on items included in this agenda. Please refer to the workflow on the preceding page for guidance.

Declarations received will be reported at the meeting.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Meeting held on 16 January 2024..

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5. Public Issues

To receive any public questions, statements or petitions submitted in accordance with the Constitution, which is available to view at the following link:-

<https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeID=151&Info=1&bcr=1>

The deadline for the submission of public questions is midday on Wednesday 10 April 2024 [midday 3 clear working days before the meeting].

The deadline for the submission of a statement is midday on Monday 15 April 2024 [midday on the working day before the meeting].

The deadline for the submission of a petition is Tuesday 2 April 2024 [10 working days before the meeting].

6. Dispensations granted January 2024 to March 2024

To advise the Standards Committee of the dispensations granted to Councillors by the Monitoring Officer during the period 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024

11 - 14

7. Code of Conduct Complaints - Review	15 - 24
<p>This report provides Members with an update on complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct against councillors received or concluded since the last report to the Committee in January 2024.</p> <p>The Committee is responsible for maintaining high standards of conduct by Members of BCP Council and the Town and Parish Councils, monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct, and considering the outcome of commissioned independent investigations.</p>	
8. Member Training requirements for 2024/2025	25 - 46
<p>This report provides the Standards Committee with an opportunity to consider the Member Training requirements for the forthcoming municipal year 2024/2025.</p>	

No other items of business can be considered unless the Chairman decides the matter is urgent for reasons that must be specified and recorded in the Minutes.

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 January 2024 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr V Ricketts – Chair

Cllr A Chapmanlaw – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr S Armstrong, Cllr E Connolly, Cllr M Haines, Cllr B Nanovo, and
Cllr O Walters

Also in Mr P Cashmore and Mr I Sibley
attendance:

15. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

16. Substitute Members

There were no substitute members.

17. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

18. Confirmation of Minutes

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 03 October 2023
be confirmed as a correct record.**

19. Public Issues

The following three statements were received from Mr McKinstry:

Statement 1.

Because they were reported to full Council, we know the identities of the non-compliant councillors in Complaints 97, 141 and 146; and we know, therefore, that the Chair of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cllr Bobbie Dove, has had two bullying allegations upheld against her and failed to undertake anti-bullying training. This in my view is an outrageous situation and the councillor should consider her position.

It strikes me, meanwhile, that besides the annual ballot, BCP's Constitution makes no provision for challenging an incumbent Chair. This Committee might therefore seek a Constitutional amendment, whereby a motion of no confidence could be brought against a Chair (or indeed any Committee member) for Code of Conduct breaches, and/or non-compliance with

sanctions. This is an excellent suggestion, as it would fortify the Standards regime while preserving committee autonomy.

Statement 2.

Regarding paragraph 22: is reporting non-compliance to Council having the desired effect? It could certainly do with strengthening. I well remember the shock in the public gallery last November, when three such reports were presented to full Council: the councillors weren't named orally, debate was prohibited, and the entire business concluded in 40 seconds. This was particularly galling since Cllr Bagwell had spent over a year failing to apologise for disrespectful conduct. Naming councillors in the chamber, specifying breaches, and incorporating those details into the minutes, would prove a stronger deterrent against non-compliance and poor behaviour generally. On the subject of chamber protocols (and unrelated to the above complaints), any apologies to full Council should be run past this Committee first, to weed out any misleading statements, and obviate tokenism.

Statement 3.

Finally, last year I contacted all county, district and unitary authorities in England, asking how many councillor complaints were determined in the year ending March 2023. This Council's figure - 61 - is the second highest among the 104 councils that replied, surpassed only by East Riding of Yorkshire District Council (532 complaints - although 512 related to the same incident). Hampshire Council had 26 complaints; Dorset, 12; and Southampton, Bedford and Tameside Councils, zero. Paragraph 24 describes BCP's "significant increase in complaints" as a "trend". In fact, the "61" figure relates only to the year ending March 2023 (see Paragraph 10), and separate evidence suggests an astronomic decrease since then. This is clear from the papers for November's scrutiny meeting, p. 31 - **"Few complaints have been made about individual councillors since the elections in May"** - and I wanted to place that on the Standards Committee's records this evening.

Janie Berry, Director of Law and Governance responded as follows:

I take on board the comments that have been made in the three public statements and I do think there is merit in the Standard's Committee's undertaking a review of the procedures which support the Code of Conduct. In my experience, it is essential that the Standards Committee upholds the absolute highest standards of ethical governance. Ensuring that all councillors here at BCP adhere to the Nolan Principles as you would expect if you stood in the shoes of a member of the public. For extremely exceptional circumstances, in my opinion, where code of conduct complaints have been upheld, the decision should be placed in the public domain. They should be reported in a prominent place on the Council's website because that meets the expectations and standards of correct ethical governance. It also meets the government's expectations of people like myself, the Head of Paid Service, the Section 151 officer and the Head

of Internal Audit accessing the best value and the governance framework of the Council. Failure to meet the demands of transparency could be seen as a significant issue for the Council's Annual Governance Statement, if there are repeated concerns over time.

In Summary, as the Monitoring Officer I accept that I am very new, but I have significant experience in supporting Standards Committees in achieving good governance. I do feel that it would be timely for the Committee to consider a review of the procedures, learn from past experiences and learn from the incidents that have been reported to you by a member of the public. It may be that you do not need to make any changes, but I do think it would be timely for the Committee to undertake the review to assure yourselves that you have all the mechanisms and the toolkit available to conduct your roles here whilst holding up the best standards of ethical governance to the maximum possibility that you have without feeling strangled.

20. Code of Conduct Complaints - Review

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

This report provided Members with an update on complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct against Councillors received or concluded since the last report to the Committee in October 2023.

The Committee reviewed the table of complaints setting out, in each case, the nature of the complaint and, where applicable, the Monitoring Officer's assessment, the decision of the Chair and the current status of the complaint.

The Committee considered the Code of Conduct Complaints Review and made the following comments:

- The Committee was advised that the deadlines and timeframes for responses from Members would be included in the reports going forward. It was confirmed to the Committee that the subject Member of a complaint had fourteen days to respond to the complaint once they had been informed.
- In response to a query raised regarding the three months given for gathering extra information, the Committee was advised that three months was the timeframe traditionally given to Members. Although it could sometimes assist in information gathering and the closing of complaints, it was advised that the timeframe could be considered as part of the review.
- In response to a query raised regarding the possible delay in dealing with code of conduct complaints during the transition between monitoring officers, the Committee was advised that the transition only affected two complaints and the complainants were informed of the delay as well as the process.

RESOLVED that the outcome of concluded complaints and the progress of those still outstanding be noted.

Voting: Unanimous

21. Annual Report on Code of Conduct Complaints

The Head of Democratic Services presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

This report provided a summary of the complaints received and determined which were made against Councillors for alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct.

The Committee considered the report and made the following comments:

- The Committee was advised that the complainant type marked as 'other' in the report referred to members of the public that were representing an organisation when lodging a Code of Conduct Complaint.
- In response to a query raised regarding the increase in Code of Conduct Complaints made by members of the public, the Committee was advised that there has not been a change in how the complaints are dealt with or how the process was advertised. Although, some of the complaints that were included in the report related to the same incident that was reported by multiple parties. The Committee was advised that the increase could be due to social media-related complaints, as well as the pre-election period last year which may have heightened aspects of political sensitivity leading to complaints.
- The Committee acknowledged those members of the public engaging with the Code of Conduct Complaints process and highlighted how positive it was.
- In response to a query raised regarding the increased workload for Democratic Services as a result of the increase in Code of Conduct Complaints, the Committee was advised that the complaints were managed by the Monitoring Officer and the Deputy Monitoring Officer. This was to ensure confidentiality throughout the process and to make sure Democratic Services Officers were not affected by these complaints in their day-to-day job roles.
- In response to a query raised regarding the procedure to identify subject Councillors at Full Council and whether it would be considered as part of the review, the Committee was advised that this would be included as part of the review. The review would not be restricted and would allow the Committee to share any ideas they would like included as a part of the review.

It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to amend Recommendations as follows:

That:

b) A review of standard procedure be commenced as soon as possible. Aiming for implementation for the new municipal year. And to formally offer our thanks to the independent person for their work and support on the Standards Committee.

RESOLVED that

- a) the annual report on code of conduct complaints be reviewed and any areas for further work be identified for inclusion in the work programme.
- b) A review of standard procedure be commenced as soon as possible. Aiming for implementation for the new municipal year. And to formally offer our thanks to the independent person for their work and support on the Standards Committee.

Voting: Unanimous

The meeting ended at 6.38 pm

CHAIR

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STANDARDS COMMITTEE



Report subject	Dispensations granted January 2024 to March 2024
Meeting date	16 April 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	To advise the Standards Committee of the dispensations granted to Councillors by the Monitoring Officer during the period 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>Standards Committee notes the dispensations granted by the Monitoring Officer during the period 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024</p>
Reason for recommendations	To support a robust ethical governance framework, the Standards Committee should be informed of decisions made in respect of Councillors and the application of the Councillor Code of Conduct.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Janie Berry, Monitoring Officer
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Information

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Following receipt of a written request, the Monitoring Officer granted dispensations to Councillor Dove and Councillor Bull, Chair and Vice Chair of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee respectively, to enable them to participate in meetings of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny on 3 January 2024, 23 January 2024 and to Councillor K Salmon who was in attendance as a substitute on 19 March 2024.
- Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 3 January 2024

	Name	Dispensation requested in writing	Status	Duration
1	Cllr Dove	Yes	Agreed	This meeting only. Debate in respect of the Safety Valve and EHCP's
2.	Cllr Bull	Yes	Agreed	This meeting only. Debate in respect of the Safety Valve and EHCP's

- Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 23 January 2024

	Name	Dispensation requested in writing	Status	Duration
1	Cllr Dove	Yes	Agreed	This meeting only. Debate in respect of the Safety Valve and

	Name	Dispensation requested in writing	Status	Duration
				EHCP's
2.	Cllr Bull	Yes	Agreed	This meeting only Debate in respect of the Safety Valve and EHCP's

4 Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 19 March 2024

	Name	Dispensation requested in writing	Status	Duration
1	Cllr K Salmon	Yes	Agreed	This meeting only. Safety Valve update from the Portfolio Holder and EHCP's, Special Educational Needs

Cabinet – 7 February 2024

- 5 A dispensation was granted to the Leader of the Council and all Members of Cabinet to enable them to consider the Budget 2024/2025 and the Medium Term Financial Plan which includes the Council Tax setting.

Council 20 February 2024 and 27 February 2024 (adjourned meeting)

- 6 A dispensation was granted to all BCP Councillors to enable them to consider and debate the Safety Valve (agenda item 6). A dispensation was granted to all BCP Councillors to enable them to consider the Budget 2024/2025 and the Medium Term Financial Plan which includes the Council Tax setting (agenda item 11).

Options Appraisal

- 7 As this report details the retrospective granting of dispensations there are no other options for the Standards Committee to consider.

Summary of financial implications

- 8 None directly arising from this report.

Summary of legal implications

- 9 In certain circumstances Councillors may be granted a dispensation which enables them to take part in Council business where this would otherwise be prohibited. A request for a dispensation must be made in writing and set out the reasons for the dispensation.
- 10 Provided Councillors act within the terms of their dispensation there is deemed to be no breach of the Code of Conduct or the law.
- 11 Section 31(4) of the Localism Act 2011 states that dispensations may allow the Councillor:
 - (a) to participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting(s); and/or
 - (b) to participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting(s).
- 12 Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 sets out the circumstances when a dispensation may be considered and granted. If a dispensation is granted, the Councillor may remain in the room where the meeting considering the business is being held and may also vote.
- 13 If a Councillor participates in a meeting where he/she has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and he/she does not have a dispensation, they may be committing a criminal offence under s34 Localism Act 2011.

Summary of human resources implications

- 14 None directly arising from this report

Summary of sustainability impact

- 15 None directly arising from this report

Summary of public health implications

- 16 None directly arising from this report

Summary of equality implications

- 17 None directly arising from this report

Summary of risk assessment

- 18 None directly arising from this report

Background papers

BCP Council - Constitution

BCP Council – Councillor Code of Conduct

Agenda, Reports and Minutes for Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings referred to in this report

Agenda, Reports and Minutes for Council referred to in this report

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE



Report subject	Code of Conduct Complaints - Review
Meeting date	16 April 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>This report provides Members with an update on complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct against councillors received or concluded since the last report to the Committee in January 2024.</p> <p>The Committee is responsible for maintaining high standards of conduct by Members of BCP Council and the Town and Parish Councils, monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct, and considering the outcome of commissioned independent investigations.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>the outcome of concluded complaints and the progress of those still outstanding be noted.</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>This is an opportunity for Members of the Committee to be appraised of details of completed complaints and any outstanding complaints of alleged breaches against the Code of Conduct. This is in accordance with the functions of the Committee and its duty to discharge functions in relation to the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct within the Council and amongst Town and Parish Councils within the area.</p>
Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	<p>Janie Berry, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services</p>
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Information

Background

1. The purpose of this report is to provide a summary and update of completed and ongoing complaints received regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct under the Localism Act 2011 against Councillors for the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area, including parish and town councils.
2. A similar report has been presented to previous meetings of the committee and now forms a regular item at committee meetings.

Analysis

3. Details of allegations/complaints in relation to the Code of Conduct are outlined in the table set out in paragraph 8 to this report. Cases which were shown as closed in the previous report have been removed from this report.
4. The adopted arrangements for dealing with allegations of breach of the code of conduct for councillors now provides for an initial assessment by the Monitoring Officer, who may, if appropriate:
 - (a) reject the complaint on the grounds that it falls outside the scope of a valid Code of Conduct complaint;
 - (b) determine that there is no breach of the Code and no further action should be taken; or
 - (c) where considered appropriate, enter into an early preliminary and informal dialogue with the complainant and the Councillor complained of, and agree a speedy informal resolution of the complaint
 - (d) refer the complaint to the Chair of Standards Committee for consideration.
5. Where complaints proceed to the Chair of the Standards Committee (in consultation with councillors of the Standards Committee, the Independent Persons and the Monitoring Officer (or their Deputy)), the Chair may decide whether:-
 - (a) there is no breach of the Code and no further action should be taken; or
 - (b) there is a potential breach of the Code and informal resolution is appropriate, to include for example mediation, training, apology, advice; or
 - (c) there is a potential breach of the Code and the Monitoring Officer should undertake or commission an investigation into the complaint with a view to a report then being considered by the Standards Committee.
6. The table contained in this report provides information about of the nature of the complaint, the assessment of the Monitoring Officer (where appropriate), the decision of the Chair (following consultation), any informal resolutions determined by Chair (where applicable), and the status of the complaint at the date of the report.
7. Certain specific detailed information regarding pending complaints has not been provided as this may be prejudicial to the conduct of the ongoing complaints process. Personal details have also not been included to protect both the identity of the subject councillors and the complainant, unless specific direction to the contrary has been expressed.

8. Table 1

Reference	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP 152	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further evidence and clarification sought from complainant as the basis of the allegation was not clear 	<p>Referred to Monitoring Officer for initial assessment. Referred back to complainant seeking further evidence and clarification.</p> <p>Further information not received – complaint therefore closed as incomplete.</p>	Closed
BCP-157	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Compromising impartiality • Prevention of access to information • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage • Misuse of council resources • Intimidation of persons involved with administration of proceedings 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed. There was insufficient evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed
BCP-159	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Breach of equalities • Disclosure of confidential information • Prevention of access to information • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage • Intimidation of persons involved with administration of proceedings 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>The subject councillor was not acting in their capacity as a councillor and there was no evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed

Reference	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-160	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p>	Pending
BCP-161	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint form not used to submit complaint • Alleges breaches of integrity and honesty 	Current under review by the Monitoring Officer.	Pending
BCP-162	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed. There was insufficient evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed
BCP-163	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Compromising the impartiality of an officer • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Intimidation of persons involved with administration of proceedings 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed. There was insufficient evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed

Reference	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-164	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Failure to promote equalities • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>There was no evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed
BCP-165	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying or harassing a person • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>There was no evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed
BCP-166	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Failure to promote equalities • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>There was no evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed
BCP-167	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed.</p> <p>There was insufficient evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed

Reference	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-168	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was dismissed. There was insufficient evidence to demonstrate the Code had been breached.</p>	Closed
BCP-169	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Failure to promote equalities • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint has been referred to an independent investigator to review.</p>	Pending
BCP-170	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bullying or harassing a person 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was partially upheld.</p> <p>Subject councillor advised of outcome and requested to apologise to complainant and attend social media training.</p>	Pending response from subject councillor
BCP-171	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassing a person • Failure to promote equalities • Improper use of information • Using or attempting to use the position as a Councillor improperly to confer advantage 	<p>Referred to Monitoring officer for initial assessment.</p> <p>Subject councillor requested and supplied response. Pending review by Chair at consultation meeting.</p>	Pending

Reference	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
BCP-172	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	Referred to Monitoring officer for initial assessment. Subject councillor requested and supplied response. Pending review by Chair at consultation meeting.	Pending
BCP-173	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Using or authorising the use of the Councils resources improperly for political purposes 	Referred to Monitoring officer for initial assessment. Subject councillor requested response to complaint.	Pending
BCP-174	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaint submission fails to identify alleged breaches 	Complainant requested to supply additional information	Pending
BCP-175	Complaint withdrawn		Withdrawn
BCP-176	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	Referred to Monitoring officer for initial assessment. Subject councillor requested response to complaint.	Pending
BCP-177	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat others with respect • Bringing the office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute 	Referred to Monitoring officer for initial assessment. Subject councillor requested response to complaint.	Pending

Reference	Nature of allegation	Outcome / Decision	Status
Town and Parish Council Complaints			
TPC-011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to treat with respect • Breach of equalities • Intimidating or attempting to intimidate • Unlawfully disclosing confidential information • Bringing office of Councillor or the Council into disrepute • Using Council resources not in accordance with Council's requirements • Failure to declare an interest • Failure to withdraw from room or seeking to influence a decision 	<p>Referred to Monitoring Officer for initial assessment. Referred back to complainant seeking further evidence and clarification.</p> <p>Further information not received – complaint therefore closed as incomplete.</p>	Closed
TPC-012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to register and disclose interests 	<p>Initially assessed by the Monitoring Officer and referred to Chair of Committee.</p> <p>Following consultation with committee members and independent persons, the complaint was referred to the Police in accordance with the Regulations.</p> <p>The Police were satisfied with the remedy to correct the register entry and that further action would not be proportionate.</p>	Closed

Summary of financial implications

9. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Summary of legal implications

10. The Council has a legal duty to respond to complaints made against councillors of allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct. The Council has adopted procedures for handling complaints.

Summary of human resources implications

11. There are no direct manpower implications arising from this report, however, the Committee will be aware that the handling and processing of complaints is resource intensive. A high volume of complaints could require the need for additional resources. It is therefore critical that the committee continuously seeks to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by all councillors to help limit the number of complaints.

Summary of sustainability impact

12. There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

13. There are no public health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

14. This report is reporting on the outcome of complaints made against councillors for alleged breaches of the Councillor's Code of Conduct and consequently there are no direct equalities implications arising from this report. The Code of Conduct includes a duty upon all councillors to promote equalities and to not discriminate unlawfully against any person. Equality implications are considered as an integral part of the complaints process.

Summary of risk assessment

15. There are no direct risks associated with this report.

Background papers

There are no background papers.

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.

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STANDARDS COMMITTEE



Report subject	Member Training requirements for 2024/2025
Meeting date	16 April 2024
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	This report provides the Standards Committee with an opportunity to consider the Member Training requirements for the forthcoming municipal year 2024/2025.
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>(a) The Standards Committee to advise on the provision of Member Training for 2024/2025</p> <p>(b) The Standards Committee considers adding the review of Member Training to its work programme for future review</p>
Reason for recommendations	The Standards Committee has the lead responsibility for the promotion of good ethical governance and works alongside the Audit and Governance Committee in the promotion of robust governance across the Council.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Janie Berry, Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For decision

Background

- Following the BCP Council Elections in May 2023, all Councillors received induction training and specific service related training, for example planning and licensing, to ensure they were equipped to fulfil their democratically elected roles.
- It is good practice to ensure training is provided regularly and this can be delivered in a variety of formats so as to ensure skillsets are kept up to date.
- The continuous provision of training helps to add robustness to the council's governance framework.
- Common topics included in regular Member training updates include (this is not an exhaustive list):
 - Planning and Licensing - The introduction of a second Planning Committee has triggered an additional training session to be delivered by the Planning Advisory Service in April 2024. This is open to all Councillors for example, those who wish to refresh their existing skills, those who may be required to substitute for a member of the Planning Committee and those who wish to be appointed to a Planning Committee. As Planning Committee is a quasi judicial committee (alongside Licensing Committee) attendance at a Planning Committee training session should be mandatory for all Councillors who wish to participate in this work.
 - Code of Conduct - All Councillors upon election are required to sign a declaration of office to adhere to the Code of Conduct. This also includes adherence to the Protocol for Councillor / Officer Relations and the regular upkeep of their respective Register of Interests.
 - Social Media - The Standards Committee has received a number of complaints recently about the use of social media by Councillors. The use of social media was covered at the Induction Session and the LGA has issued guidance to all Councillors which can be located at the following link [Social media guidance for councillors | Local Government Association](#)
 - Access to information and the status of information presented to council meetings and the responsibly management of information held. It is important for the Council's information to be managed correctly and this includes material shared in council meetings. The constitution provides helpful guidance and interpretation but a breach of these provisions could have negative consequences for the Council.
- Councillors in BCP Council also have accessed to dedicated training platforms:

Skillgate online learning

6. Members have access to the online training portal and are required to complete a number of statutory training modules including information governance, safeguarding and equalities. The take up of this training is monitored and at the time of writing approximately 81% of Councillors have completed the prerequisite courses.

Member Support SharePoint – Digital Members Room and Training Library

7. A comprehensive Member Induction Programme was launched following the elections in May 2023, a copy of the initial programme is appended to this report. The dates and times of some sessions were altered for operational reasons.
8. To support members, daytime and evening sessions were delivered where possible but inevitably it was impossible for all members to attend every session. To assist in this regard, and to serve as an on-going resource repository for refresher training, a digital library of appropriate sessions were captured and have been published on a SharePoint site. This includes a recording of the training session, copies of the slides and other useful guidance documents.
9. This site was intended as a work in progress suggestions for additional material useful for councillors is always welcomed.

Options Appraisal

10. Whilst it is good practice to have a continuous training programme, the Standards Committee may alternatively decide that the Member Induction delivered in 2023, supported by the online learning is sufficient to meet Councillors development needs.

Summary of financial implications

11. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

Summary of legal implications

12. There are no legal implications directly arising from this report, however all Councillors are required to adhere to the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct.

Summary of human resources implications

13. There are no human resources implications directly arising from this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

14. There are no issues directly arising from this report.

Summary of public health implications

15. There are no public health implications directly arising from this report.

Summary of equality implications

16. There are no equality implications directly arising from this report.

Summary of risk assessment

17. Failure to undertake training may expose the Council to some degree of risk for example in the area of information governance where training is mandatory.

Background papers

Council Constitution

Code of Conduct for BCP Councillors

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Initial Members Induction programme – May 2023

Essential Induction/Councillor Training 2023*

*This is an initial list and may be subject to revision. Further information will be forthcoming as required.

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
MAY 2023			
The Council: Structure and Contacts Quick run through of service areas and familiarisation with new corporate structure Key challenges / opportunities Corporate policies and embedded principles Signposting for key contacts (Cllr use only) and how to navigate Teams.	09 May 11.30 – 13.30 14:00 – 16:00 10 May 13:00 – 15:00 18:00 – 20:00 Location: Phoebe (Cllrs) / Virtual/Hybrid (Officers)	All Councillors	Internal Timings: 20 mins per service area Introduction: Graham Farrant, Chief Executive Operations: Jess Gibbons, Chief Operations officer Supported by Julian McLaughlin, Amanda Barrie, Kate Langdown, Matti Raudsepp, Sam Fox, Kelly Ansell Children's Services: Cathi Hadley, Corporate Director of Children's Services Supported by Jane White, Sarah Rempel, Rachel Gravett, Juliette Blake Wellbeing: new Corporate Director of Wellbeing (TBC) Supported by Betty Butlin, Phil Hornsby, Sam Crowe Resources: new Corporate Director of Resources (TBC) Supported by Susan Zeiss, Adam Richens, Isla Reynolds, Sarah Ray-Deane, Katie Lacey

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Councillor Photographs Tour of the building	09-10 May 23 Following each session above	Photos - All Councillors Tour – new Councillors	Corporate Communications team Greg Smith / Andy Beeson-Brackstone / Brad Marsh Democratic Services Team
IT Equipment Handover and Familiarisation Provision of IT Hardware for new Cllrs - 1 st week Set up multi factor authentication and log in to new laptops Introduction to Teams Signposting for support – promotion of online self-service/service desk	11 May 09:00 – 10:00 11:00 – 12:00 13:00 – 14:00 15:00 – 16:00 12 May 13:00 – 14:00 15:00 – 16:00 Location: Room 206 – (Building access is limited due to building works - Access via the Extension entrance and lift to floor E2 and then the stairs to floor 2 of the main building)	New Councillors	Internal 1 hour IT setup Multiple sessions, 6-8 max at each session ICT Services - Katrina Roberts / Dom Gatrell / Dolorosa Fisher / Philip Ketley Democratic Services Team

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
<p>Decision making at BCP Council</p> <p>Understanding the Constitution and decision-making committee flow charts, to demonstrate the appropriate routes of decision-making.</p> <p>Overview of the role of Cabinet, Council and Committees.</p> <p>The role of the Councillor in decision-making.</p> <p>Procedure Rules for meetings, including the role of the Chairman of Council.</p> <p>Declarations of interest, voting and overview and scrutiny – an overview.</p> <p>The role and duties of Statutory officers, e.g. HoPS, s151 and MO.</p> <p>Policy approval.</p> <p>Officer report writing process.</p>	<p>11 May 18:00 – 20:00</p> <p>12 May 10:00 – 12:00 Location: Phoebe</p>	<p>All Councillors</p>	<p>Internal/ Service</p> <p>Richard Jones & Susan Zeiss</p> <p>Democratic Services team</p>

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
<p>Overview and Scrutiny</p> <p>Scrutiny basics:</p> <p>The Executive model of governance and the checks and balances provided by the O&S function.</p> <p>The purpose of scrutiny and the roles of Councillors on Overview & Scrutiny committees</p> <p>Items for inclusion on Forward Plan – not limited to Cabinet reports, but broader topics including in-depth service reviews</p> <p>The critical friend role.</p> <p>The calling-in of decisions process.</p>	<p>15 May 23</p> <p>14:00 – 16:00</p> <p>18:00 – 20:00</p> <p>Location: Phoebe</p>	<p>All Councillors</p>	<p>External/ Internal</p> <p>CfGS</p>

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Introduction to Civic arrangements Robing/fitting for Annual Meeting Advice on Regalia	15 May 12:00 – 14:00 18 May 12:00 – 14:00 Bournemouth: Civic Centre (meet in reception) 30 May 10:00 -12:00 01 June 12:00 – 2:00 Poole: Upton House (meet in reception)	Trustees	Internal Carolyn Suter Hazel Randall Jeff Brown Gary Richards
An Introduction to Licensing Processes All Councillors be encouraged to attend	16 & 17 May 10:00 – 14:00 (all Cllrs) 24 May 11:00 – 16:30 (Licensing Committee Members and Reserves) Location: Annexe Committee Room	All Councillors	External Peter Saville

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
<p>Code of Conduct Training</p> <p>The role of the Standards Committee.</p> <p>The Constitution and setting expectations of roles and behaviours.</p> <p>Councillor/Officer protocol.</p> <p>The management of intimidation and harassment.</p> <p>Values and Behaviours – ‘Debate not Hate’</p>	<p>22 May 23</p> <p>14:00 – 16:00</p> <p>25 May</p> <p>14:00 – 16:00</p> <p>Location: Phoebe</p>	<p>All Councillors</p>	<p>Internal</p> <p>Richard Jones & Susan Zeiss & Ingrid Brown</p> <p>Democratic Services</p>
<p>Children Services / Children’s Social Care</p> <p>Children Care Act</p> <p>Corporate Parenting</p> <p>Working with children and young people</p> <p>Working within a children’s service moving from ‘inadequate’ - improvement plan, etc</p>	<p>22 May</p> <p>18:00 – 20:00</p> <p>31 May</p> <p>15:00 – 17:00</p> <p>Location: Phoebe</p>	<p>All Councillors</p>	<p>Internal</p> <p>Cathi Hadley</p> <p>Juliette Blake</p> <p>Sara Scholey</p> <p>Rachel Gravett</p> <p>Jo Fry</p>

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Adult Social Care & Safeguarding Key headlines – purpose of Social Care Health & Care Act Commissioning Safeguarding adults	24 May 18:00 – 20:00 30 May 14:00 – 16:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Phil Hornsby Betty Butlin
An Introduction to BCP & Local Government Finance Context General Fund / HRA / Schools Councils Budget 2023/24 Revenue and Capital Funding Sources Council Tax Financial Planning – MTFP & Budget Setting Treasury Management Financial Regulations & role of Audit Value for Money & Procurement Statutory / Management Accounts	25 May 2023 18:00 – 20:00 Location: Phoebe (Cllrs) Virtual/Hybrid (Officers)	All Councillors	Internal Financial Services Adam Richens

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Cabinet Member Training Being an effective Portfolio Holder Report writing and review process Cabinet Members meeting with companies, Government ministers, junior Staff (reference office/member relations protocol). Specific portfolio holder responsibilities	31 May 10:00 – 12:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Graham Farrant Susan Zeiss Adam Richens Richard Jones
JUNE 2023			
Introduction to Transformation Governance arrangements / future plans / Cllr involvement. Reinforcement of Members as part of process to achieve efficiencies/savings. Transformation cross party working group for new members – Leaders of each Party (or nominated reps)	05 June 13:30 – 15:30 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Graham Farrant Katie Lacey Matti Raudsepp Sarah Ray-Deane Adam Richens

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
An Introduction to Planning Processes	08 June 23 14:00 – 16:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Sam Fox Alex Chrusciak David Hodges
Education School performance and Cllr interaction with schools SEND agenda – written statement of action School Place planning / Admissions / Appeals	12 June 10:00 – 12:00 21 June 18:00 – 20:00	All Councillors	Internal Sarah Rempel Helen Becker Tanya Smith
Safeguarding Working with partners Our responsibilities Reporting process Structures and governance	22 June 14:00 – 16:00 18:00 – 20:00	All Councillors	Internal Tammy Lawrence Rachel Gravett
Overview & Scrutiny budget training	26 June 12:00 – 13:00 Virtual		External Southwest Overview and Scrutiny Network Ian Parry, Centre for Governance and Scrutiny

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Chairing and & Managing Effective meetings Aimed at those who will Chair meetings, but open to all as transferable skills, which can be used in the community and leading projects.	26 June 14:00 – 16:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal/external Democratic Services Induction Pack: LGA <i>A councillor's workbook on chairing skills</i> – useful resource Managing effective meetings.
Communicating effectively BCP Council media protocol Working with the media Using social media effectively Social media etiquette and privacy Social media at BCP Council	28 June 23 14:00 – 16:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Isla Reynolds Liam Creedon Carly Hoyle Isabela Gamble
Transportation and Highways / Coasts Highways Engineering Traffic Sustainable travel FCERM- Flood and coastal erosion management Reporting tools / process	29 June 15:00 – 16:00 18:00 – 19:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Julian Mclaughlin Richard Pincroft Matt Hosey Head of Engineering (if in post) Sarah Good

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
JULY 2023			
Community Safety To advise Councillors of their role and responsibilities in line with: How to engage with community / report issues Rolling programme – annual RIPA & surveillance training. Scrutiny – annual report. To cover any agency concerns – health; police; etc. Community Safety Partnership Graffiti Fly-tipping	03 July 10:00 – 12:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Annual sessions to meet statutory requirements Some may be more relevant to be held in line with specific Committees, i.e. Scrutiny and Health & well-Being Board etc Kelly Ansell RIPA SRO Mark Callahan – Chief Superintendent
Environment Waste & Cleansing Green Spaces Bereavement Highways Maintenance Signpost reporting list of contacts – customer services + option for site visits	04 July 23 10:00 – 11:00 12:30 – 13:30 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Kate Langdown Ian Poultney Martin Whitchurch Georgie Fry Simon Legg Liz Hall

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Housing Refugee settlement New council housing stock Regulation/legislation Homelessness	06 July 23 10:00 – 12:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Kelly Ansell Ben Tomlin
Commercial Operations Seafront, including seasonal response Leisure Car parking operations and enforcement Events Offer of site visits (outside of these scheduled sessions)	11 July 10:30 – 12:00 12 July 18:00 – 19:30 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Amanda Barrie Jon Weaver Anthony Rogers Helen Wildman Robert Pickernell
Equality / Diversity & Inclusion To cover relevant equality legislation and information regarding Impact Assessments, relevant to the elected councillor role.	12 July 14:00 – 16:00 24 July 18:00 – 20:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Sam Johnson Bridget Webber Cat McMillan Kathy Boston-Mammah

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Enabling Communities Expectation management Role of Cllrs Signposting Rolling programme - annual	19 July 23 14:00 – 15:30 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Jess Gibbons Cat McMillan
Councillors making complaints on behalf of residents How to submit a complaint and the process involved.	25 July 13:00 – 13:30 Location: Online	All Councillors	Internal Bridget Webber
POST INDUCTION PERIOD			
Emergency planning To make councillors aware of the council's civil protection duties under the Civil Contingencies Act and the role of councillors in relation to this. To include a risk profile of BCP Council from an emergency planning perspective and how command and control across BCP Council and the multi-agency partnership works. Reporting line to Audit & Governance Committee	04 September 14:00 – 15:00 18:00 – 19:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Alyson Whitley Adam Richens Nigel Stannard

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Climate Change How the Council is addressing the climate emergency How can people get involved?	05 September 14:00 – 15:00 18:00 – 19:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal Matt Montgomery
Health & Wellbeing To make Councillors aware of the benefits of well-being, mental and physical health. Joint public health service Integrated care system / Board Health & WB Board meetings	06 September 14:00 – 16:00 18:00 – 20:00 Location: Phoebe	All Councillors	Internal New Director for Wellbeing Sam Crowe

Committee Training – May/June 2023

In addition, there are specific training requirements for certain Committees:

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Appeals Committee All Committee members must be trained before hearing any cases. (All other councillors encouraged to attend for substitution and general awareness) Additionally, equality and conduct issues to be covered. Conduct at meetings	30 May 09:00 (immediately prior to Appeals Committee) Conduct at meetings – refresher sessions to be held twice a year	All Committee Members	Internal Carly Williams
Licensing Sub-Committee All Committee members must be trained before hearing any cases. (All other councillors encouraged to attend for general awareness)	16 and 17 May 10:00 – 14:00 24 May 11:00 – 16.30 Location: Annexe Committee Room	All Committee Members	External Peter Savill 16 and 17 May 2023 10:00 – 14:00 Identical sessions compulsory for the licensing committee to attend one of and open to all members for basic overview of all things licensing. 24 May 2023 11:00 – 16.30 To follow Licensing Committee and compulsory for all members of the Licensing Committee for more detailed overview of areas that come before the committee most often and decision making. To also be opened for all members

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Planning Committee All Committee members must be trained before hearing any cases. (All other councillors encouraged to attend for substitution and general awareness)	23 May 10:00 – 15:00 Annual session May, followed by quarterly refresher sessions	All Committee Members	Internal/external - Sam Fox Alex Chrusciak David Hodges Robert Firth Tanya Coulter
Standards Committee All Committee members must be trained before hearing any cases. (All other councillors encouraged to attend for substitution and general awareness)	14 June 14:00 – 16:00 Annual session May/June, followed by quarterly refresher sessions	All Committee Members	Internal Ingrid Brown Susan Zeiss
Audit and Governance Committee Terms of Reference Focus on Governance National Context / recommendations including direction of travel of A&G Committees	15 June 2023 18:00 – 20:00 MS Teams Meeting Separate training / good practice awareness sessions will be provided on the Account Accounts and Treasury Management.	All Committee Members	Internal Nigel Stannard Matt Filmer

Training / Session to be delivered	When / Where	Attendees	Suggested Delivery
Lower Central Gardens Trust Board Introduction to the Trust	14 July 10:00 – 11:30	All Committee Members	Tanya Coulter

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