

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 January 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Baron – Chairman

Councillors: Cllr N Brooks (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr M Andrews, Cllr D Borthwick, Cllr A Jones, Cllr C Rigby,
Cllr A Stribley

Also in attendance: Mr P Cashmore, Mr I Sibley, Mr J Storey (Independent Persons)

27. Apologies

There were no apologies received on this occasion.

28. Substitute Members

There were no substitute members on this occasion.

29. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations received on this occasion.

30. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2021 were agreed as a true and correct record.

Voting: unanimous

31. Public Issues

No issues have been received on this occasion.

32. Review of Register of Gifts and Hospitality

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 provides details of the Register of Gifts & Hospitality for councillors for the year 2019/20.

The Standards Committee were advised that it had responsibility for considering an annual report on the register and to make any comments and/or recommendations concerning the register as it considered appropriate.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that:

- (a) the Committee reviewed the Register of Gifts & Hospitality for Councillors; and
- (b) the introduction of a quarterly publication of declarations in accordance with the Best Practice Recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life be supported.

Voting: Unanimous

33. 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 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Committee was provided with an update on complaints regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct against councillors received or concluded since the last meeting in October 2020.

The Committee was advised that it was 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.

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

Voting: Unanimous

34. Consideration of Report in Respect of Complaint about a Councillor

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 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Standards Committee were advised of the conclusions of the investigation following complaints made about Councillor Peter Hall. The investigator's report was attached at Appendix 1. The conclusion of the investigator was that there was no evidence to support the allegations and that Councillor Hall was not acting in his capacity as a councillor.

The Committee was asked to consider the investigator's report and accept the recommendations.

The Committee was advised that all the correct procedures had been followed and the issue had been addressed immediately. There was no evidence of collusion.

RESOLVED that the findings and recommendations of the independent investigator be accepted.

Voting: Unanimous

35. Local Government Association - Model Councillor Code of Conduct

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 'D' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Local Government Association had produced a New Model Member Code of Conduct which was appended to this report at Appendix 1.

The Standards Committee was responsible for monitoring the Code of Conduct and for making recommendations to Full Council on any changes to the Code.

The Committee was asked to note the new Code at this stage but to invite interested parties and other stakeholders to provide comment on the Council's existing Code and the LGA Model Code, in accordance with the best practice recommendations of the Committee for Standards in Public Life.

The Committee welcomed the report and were in support of the recommendations.

The Committee felt that on the availability of the model Code of Conduct, it should be presented to this Committee as soon as possible, to allow recommendations to be made to Full Council. If the published timetable of meetings did not fit in with this process, an extraordinary meeting may need to be arranged.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (a) the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct be welcomed and the committee await the outcome of the Government consideration of the Committee for Standards in Public Life recommendations;**
- (c) the comments of parish and town councils, community organisations, neighbouring authorities and other interested parties, individuals and stakeholders be invited on both the Council's existing Code of Conduct and the LGA's Model Councillor Code of Conduct; and**
- (d) a further report be presented to the next meeting of the Committee in April 2021 with the outcome of (a) and (b) above and an update on the associated work of the Constitution Review Working Group.**

Voting: Unanimous

The meeting ended at 7.05 pm

CHAIRMAN