

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of **Standards Committee** held in Committee Room 1A , County Hall, Durham on **Friday 2 September 2022 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor J Nicholson (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors G Smith, T Smith, T Stubbs and C Varty

Co-opted Members:

Parish Councillor R Harrison

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Atkinson, L Maddison, A Savory, F Tinsley and Town Councillor T Batson.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2021/2022

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer which provided an overview of the work of the Standards Committee during 2021/22 and to set out the future direction that the Committee intended to take during 2022/23 (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

The Governance Lawyer was in attendance to present the report.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That the report be presented to Council on 21 September 2022.

5 National Picture

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer which informed Members of the national picture on standard issues affecting Local Government (for copy, see file of minutes).

The Governance Lawyer was in attendance to present the report and advised Members that it was the Localism Act 2011 and not 2017 as stated in the report.

In response to a question, the Governance Lawyer explained that Max Caller CBE who led the independent governance review at Northumbria County Council was a senior leader with extensive experience in local government.

Resolved: That the report be noted, and Officers monitor the progress of the matters referred to and keep the Committee updated.

6 Code of Conduct Update

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer which provided an update on the activity since the last meeting in respect of complaints received by Durham County Council against Councillors (for copy of report, see file of minutes).

The Governance Lawyer was in attendance to present the report and advised Members that the training delivered in conjunction with CDALC on 27 July 2022 was poorly attended and further training would be arranged to be held in October 2022.

Resolved: That the contents of the report be noted.