

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

At a Meeting of **Standards Committee** held in Committee Room 1A - County Hall, Durham on **Monday 24 November 2014** at **9:30 am**

Present: **Councillor J Armstrong (Chairman)**

Members of the Standards Committee:

Councillors E Bell, J Clark, M Dixon, B Graham, I Jewell, B Stephens and M Williams.

Town Councillor T Batson and Parish Councillor R Harrison.

Apologies:

Councillors G Holland, and E Huntington.

1 Minutes of the Meeting held 3 September 2014

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 September 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 North East Regional Chairs/Vice Chairs of Standards/Governance Committees and Independent Persons Meeting

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer which provided an update to members following the meeting of the North East Regional Chairs/Vice Chairs of Standards/Governance Committee and Independent Persons (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented the report and gave an overview of the topics which had been discussed at the meeting.

The Chairman advised that Durham County Council would be hosting the next Regional Meeting, which would be arranged for a date in March 2015.

Members of the Committee were particularly pleased to learn of the work being undertaken by the regional Monitoring Officers Group to develop a Social Media Policy for members.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

4 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

5 Update on the Handling of Current Complaints

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services which provided an update report in respect of complaints of alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Deputy Monitoring Officer presented the report, which demonstrated to Members the rate of business which was being dealt with in relation to Code of Conduct complaints.

The Chairman advised the Committee that, in conjunction with officers, he had been involved in several visits to Parish and Town Councils to deliver update training in relation to the Code of Conduct. Such visits had all been at the request of the local Councils and all sessions had been well attended and well received.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.