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Standards Committee

3 July 2019

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE,  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 3RD JULY, 2019 AT 10.00 AM  
IN THE CONNAUGHT ROOM - TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-SEA,  
CO15 1SE**

<b>Present:</b>	Councillors Land (Chairman), Alexander, Harris, J Henderson, Overton and Wiggins
<b>Also Present:</b>	Councillor I J Henderson
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Lisa Hastings (Head of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer), Linda Trembath (Senior Solicitor (Litigation and Governance) & Deputy Monitoring Officer), Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer) and Debbie Bunce (Legal and Governance Administration Officer)
<b>Also in Attendance:</b>	Sue Gallone, Clarissa Gosling and Jane Watts (all of whom were the Council's appointed Independent Persons)

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Amos (with Councillor Alexander substituting) and David Irvine (one of the Council's appointed Independent Persons).

**2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

It was moved by Councillor Land, seconded by Councillor Harris and:-

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee, held on Wednesday 20 March 2019, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none on this occasion.

**4. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 37**

There were none on this occasion.

**5. STANDARDS COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

As this was the first meeting of the Committee following the District Council elections in May, the Council's Monitoring Officer (Lisa Hastings) explained the terms of reference and delegated powers of the Standards Committee and also the Town and Parish Councils' Standards Sub-Committee and responded to Members' questions thereon.

The Committee noted the foregoing.

**6. CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING**

The Monitoring Officer updated the Committee on the Members' Code of Conduct training that had been provided to Members as part of the post-election Members' Induction process.

After discussion, it was moved by Councillor Land, seconded by Councillor J Henderson and:-

**RESOLVED** that –

- (a) the Monitoring Officer be requested to arrange a further session of training on the Members' Code of Conduct for those Members who did not attend on 15 May 2019; and
- (b) the Committee stresses once again the importance of all Members receiving training on the Members' Code of Conduct.

**7. “THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS REPORT DATED JANUARY 2019 FOLLOWING A REVIEW BY THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE”**

Further to Minute 53(4) of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 March 2019, the Monitoring Officer gave an update on the progress being made on the implementation of the Committee on Standards in Public Life's (CSPL) recommendations.

The Committee had before it a summary of the issues, overall findings and recommendations arising from the CSPL's review which formed the basis of the Monitoring Officer's update.

Further to an undertaking given at the last meeting of the Committee, the Monitoring Officer outlined the Council's current position in regards to professional indemnity cover for Members, Officers and the Independent Persons. She confirmed that there was no business need at present for such general cover but that decisions would be taken as needed on their individual merits.

Following a discussion of the issues arising in the update the Monitoring Officer undertook to submit to the next meeting of the Committee a breakdown of:-

- (1) which of the CSPL's recommendations required changes in legislation;
- (2) which of the CSPL's 'good practice' recommendations could be adopted and implemented straight away by local authorities; and
- (3) which of the 'good practice' recommendations referred to in (2) above this Council has already implemented.

It was then moved by Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor J Henderson and:-

**RESOLVED** that the Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits Services be requested to produce for the Committee's consideration a business case for providing a general professional indemnity cover for Members, Officers and, in particular, the Independent Persons.

**8. QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS UPDATE**

The Monitoring Officer circulated to the Committee the quarterly schedule, which gave an update on existing cases together with general details of new cases, without providing any names, and went through them with the Committee. There had been no requests for dispensations from Members.

The Committee noted the foregoing.

**9. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS' STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE**

Pursuant to the provisions of Article 9.05 of the Council's Constitution, the Committee was requested to appoint three of its members to serve on the Town and Parish Councils' Standards Sub-Committee for the 2019/2020 Municipal Year.

**RESOLVED** that –

- (a) subject to (b) below, Councillors Overton, Steady and Wiggins be appointed to serve on the Town and Parish Councils' Standards Sub-Committee for the 2019/2020 Municipal Year; and
- (b) Councillor Steady's appointment be subject to confirmation by him of his willingness to serve on the Sub-Committee.

The meeting was declared closed at 11.29 am

**Chairman**

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