

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
ETHICAL GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

held in
The Council Chamber,
The Symington Building, Adan & Eve Street, Market Harborough

26th June 2018

commencing at 6.30 p.m.

Present:

Cllr Evans (Chairman)

Councillors: Brodrick, Dunton and Hadkiss.

Parish Member: Mrs J. Butcher.

Officers: V. Wenham and P. Storey.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 2018/19

RESOLVED: that Councillor Evans be elected as Chairman of the Committee for the year 2018/19.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR 2018/19

RESOLVED: that Councillor Brodrick be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the year 2018/19.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Graves, Hallam and Modha, and Parish Members Mr D. Gair and Mrs J. Robson.

It was noted that Cllrs Dunton and Graves had replaced Cllrs Galton and Knowles as members of the Committee.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26th MARCH 2018

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Ethical Governance Committee held on 26th March 2018 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

UPDATE ON COMPLAINTS

The Committee considered the Update on Complaints report and the current position regarding complaints, as set out at Appendix A to the report.

The Monitoring Officer stated that rather than including closed historical cases in Appendix A to the report she had only included cases from the beginning of 2017 onwards. The majority of those cases are closed, although complaints SC/37 and SC/40 are still outstanding.

Another Deputy Monitoring Officer had been appointed to deal with these cases, which are multiple complaints. It is hoped that both cases will be concluded in the near future and reported to the Committee at a later stage. It was noted that no date for the receipt of SC/40 had been included in the report and the Monitoring Officer undertook to circulate the date to members outside the meeting.

RESOLVED:

1. That the current position regarding complaints, as set out at Appendix A to the report be noted.
2. That the date SC/40 had been received be circulated to members outside the meeting.

WORKPLAN 2018/19

The Committee considered the Workplan 2017/18 report and made the following comments:

- The addition of time guidelines into the existing arrangements for dealing with complaints;
- The addition of more detail to the complaints procedure flowchart, which is considered to be a good diagrammatic representation of the process;
- Closed complaints could be anonymised and studied collectively to ascertain if there are any recurring issues or any training deficits which the Committee could consider and which could be included in the induction training programme after the local elections in 2019.

RESOLVED:

1. That the workplan, as set out at Appendix A to the report and with the inclusion of the comments in the preamble above, form the basis of the work to be undertaken by the Committee during the year.
2. That the Monitoring Officer present a report to the Committee on recurrent trends and training issues arising from a study of the closed complaints.

SECTION 100A (4) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

It was

RESOLVED: That the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the matters yet to be discussed involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 & 2 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER – COMPLAINT SC/39

The Committee considered the report and its appendices which related to a complaint about the conduct of a Parish Councillor. The Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the exempt appendices attached to the report.

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report and explained that she had received a complaint, had contacted the Subject Member and had decided to appoint an Independent Person to review material relating to the complaints.

The Monitoring Officer outlined the three courses of action that were open to the Committee regarding each of the complaints:

- No action
- Other action such as training, support, mediation
- Refer for investigation

The Committee considered the details of the Council's Code of Conduct, the complaint and supporting documentation, the Subject Member's responses to the complaints and the comments of the Independent Person.

The Committee, having considered the complaints and with reference to the views of the Independent Person,

RESOLVED:

That complaint SC/39 be referred for Investigation.

The Meeting ended at 7.06 p.m.