

West Suffolk Joint Standards Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Suffolk Joint Standards Committee** held on **Wednesday 19 August 2015** at **6.00 pm** at the **Council Chamber, District Offices**, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, IP28 7EY

Present: **Councillors**

St Edmundsbury Borough Council

John Burns
Bob Cockle
Jim Thorndyke

Forest Heath District Council

David Bowman
Rona Burt
Bill Sadler

16. **Election of Chairman for 2015/2016**

This being the first meeting of the West Suffolk Joint Standards Committee since both Authority's Annual Meetings in May, the Monitoring Officer opened the meeting and asked for nominations for the Chairman of the Committee for 2015/2016.

Members were advised that whilst nothing was stipulated in the Terms of Reference, it had been practice since the Joint Committee was formed in 2012 for the chairmanship to be annually rotated between the two authorities. The chairmanship for 2014/2015 had been held by Forest Heath District Council.

Councillor Rona Burt nominated Councillor David Bowman as Chairman and this was seconded by Councillor Bill Sadler.

Councillor Bob Cockle also nominated Councillor Jim Thorndyke as Chairman and this was seconded by Councillor John Burns.

Each nomination was then put to the vote. With 2 voting for Councillor Bowman (with 4 abstentions) and with 3 voting for Councillor Thorndyke (with 3 abstentions), it was

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Jim Thorndyke be elected Chairman for 2015/2016.

Councillor Thorndyke then took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting and requested nominations for the election of the Vice-Chairman.

17. **Election of Vice-Chairman for 2015/2016**

Councillor Rona Burt nominated Councillor David Bowman as Vice-Chairman and this was seconded by Councillor Bob Cockle, and with the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That Councillor David Bowman be elected as Vice-Chairman for 2015/2016.

18. **Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

19. **Substitutes**

There were no substitutes at the meeting.

20. **Public Participation**

There were no questions/statements from members of the public.

21. **Minutes**

On consideration of the minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2015 Councillor Bob Cockle raised a question with regard to Minute Number 11. (Public Participation) and asked if the lady who had addressed the meeting had ever received a formal written apology in respect of the complaint she made concerning a District Councillor.

The Monitoring Officer explained that to her knowledge the written apology had never been issued. However, the Member in question was no longer a District Councillor, having failed to have been re-elected in May 2015.

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2015 were then unanimously accepted by the Committee as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

22. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and 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 prescribed in Part 1 Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and indicated against each item.

23. **Code of Conduct Investigation (Exempt - para 1) (Report No JST/JT/15/002)**

The Monitoring Officer presented this report which requested that the Joint Committee consider whether there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct in this case and, if so, what sanction to impose.

Members considered the report of the Investigating Officer and the report of the Independent Person together with all supporting documentation.

The Monitoring Officer explained that during the investigation it was established that the Member in question did not fail to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest against the omitted declaration; meaning that the Member did not break the law in respect of the Localism Act 2011.

The Joint Committee were of the opinion that there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct, however, they considered this to have been a genuine mistake and welcomed the Member's willingness to receive refresher training.

The Joint Committee also asked the Monitoring Officer to send a bulletin to all West Suffolk Councillors reminding them of their responsibility to ensure that their Register of Interests was kept up to date.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That, having considered the report of the Independent Person, the Joint Committee found that there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct and that the Monitoring Officer be instructed to arrange appropriate training for the Member.

The meeting concluded at 6.26 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
