

West Suffolk Standards Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Suffolk Standards Committee** held on **Wednesday 15 March 2023** at **5.00 pm** in **Room GFR-14, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present: **Councillors**

Chair Jim Thorndyke

Vice Chair Cliff Waterman

John Augustine

Roger Dicker

Margaret Marks

Andy Neal

31. **Apologies for absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

Councillor Robert Everitt was unable to attend the meeting.

32. **Substitutes**

No substitutions were declared.

33. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

34. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

35. **Public participation**

There were no members of the public in attendance on this occasion.

36. **Exclusion of press and public**

As the next item on the agenda was exempt, it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the following items because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items, there would be disclosure to them of exempt

categories of information as prescribed in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and indicated against the items and, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

37. **Breach of the Code of Conduct (Report No STC/WS/23/001) (Exempt: Paras 1 & 2)**

The Monitoring Officer presented this report which concerned a breach of the Code of Conduct where the Councillor concerned had refused to comply with the sanction imposed upon them.

Following discussions with the Independent Person and in line with due process, the Monitoring Officer contacted the Chair and Vice Chair of the Standards Committee who agreed for a meeting of the Committee to be arranged in order to consider the matter.

As part of the discussion on the report, the Monitoring Officer provided background on the nature of the original complaint to Members of the Committee.

In related discussion, the Monitoring Officer also sought the Committee's support in reviewing West Suffolk Council's Standards Procedures later in the year. With particular focus on changing the way in which complaints were reported to the Committee and the sanctions available to exercise.

It was proposed by Councillor Margaret Marks, seconded by Councillor John Augustine and with 5 voting for the motion and with 1 against, it was

RESOLVED:

That, the Monitoring Officer contact the Town Council concerned in order to recommend that the Councillor in question receive formal censure at a public meeting of the Town Council. The expectation that all Councillors of the Town Council would receive Code of Conduct training following the May elections would also be highlighted.

The meeting concluded at 5.30 pm

Signed by:

Chair
