

West Suffolk Joint Standards Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Suffolk Joint Standards Committee** held on **Monday 15 December 2014** at **6.00 pm** at the **Council Chamber, District Offices**, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, IP28 7EY

Present: **Councillors**

Chairman Eddie Stewart
Vice Chairman Jim Thorndyke

Forest Heath District Council
Roger Dicker
Carol Lynch

St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Bob Cockle
Derek Redhead

1. **Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Substitutes**

There were no substitutes at the meeting.

3. **Public Participation**

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

4. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2014 were unanimously accepted by the Committee as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

5. **Summary of Complaints Received for 2014 (Report No: JST/JT/14/001)**

The Monitoring Officer presented this report which provided Members with a summary of the complaints received under the Code of Conduct in 2014.

In the year to-date, 12 complaints against Councillors had been received (this covered both Forest Heath District Council, St Edmundsbury Borough Council and the Parish/Town Councils within both Districts). This level of complaints did not appear to be showing significant change since the introduction of the new Standards regime, nor was there any pattern emerging that would give cause for concern.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

(Councillor Roger Dicker left the meeting at 6.05 pm).

6. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business raised.

7. 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 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and indicated against each item.

8. Report of Code of Conduct Investigation (Exempt - para 1) (Report No: JST/JT/002)

The Monitoring Officer presented this report which requested that the 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 and it was proposed and duly seconded, that the Committee find that there had been a breach of paragraph 1 of the Code of Conduct. That the sanction imposed be that the Member be censured and that a letter be sent to the Member advising him that the Committee considered that this type of conduct was not appropriate and warning him to be more careful in the future.

This motion was then put to the vote and with 2 voting for the motion and with 3 voting against, the Chairman declared the motion lost.

It was then proposed and duly seconded, that the Committee find that there had been a breach of paragraph 1 of the Code of Conduct and that the sanction imposed be that the Member be asked to submit a written apology to the complainant.

With 3 voting for the motion and with 2 voting against, it was

RESOLVED:

That the Committee find that there had been a breach of paragraph 1 of the Code of Conduct and that the sanction imposed be that the Member be asked to submit a written apology to the complainant.

It was also agreed that the wording of the apology did not need the prior approval of the Chairman and the Monitoring Officer.

The Meeting concluded at 6.30 pm

Signed by:

Chairman
