

BOROUGH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD
STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held at the Front Committee Room - Town Hall, Reigate on 25 June 2018 at 7.00 pm.

Present: Councillors Mrs. R. S. Turner (Chairman), Mrs. R. Mill (Vice-Chair), T. Archer, N. D. Harrison and F. Kelly (Substitute); and co-opted Member Councillor J. Baird of Horley Town Council.

Members were advised at the start of the meeting that there was a need to consider 'Apologies' (item 4 on the agenda) first in order for Councillor F. Kelly to vote as a substitute during items 1 - 3.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R. C. Newstead (substituted for by Councillor F. Kelly); and co-opted Member Councillor Mrs. J. Ashton of Salfords and Sidlow Parish Council.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs. R. S. Turner be elected Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

Councillor Mrs. R. S. Turner took the Chair.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs. R. Mill be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2016 be approved as a correct record.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

6. ANNUAL STANDARDS REPORT

The Committee received an update on Standards matters from the Interim Monitoring Officer. The report covered:

- Code of Conduct;
- Register of Interests;
- Complaints procedures;
- Code of Conduct complaints 2017/18;
- Group Leader meetings;
- Member training;

- Arrangements for appointing a statutory Monitoring Officer.

Members asked why the formal process for complaints in respect of Members and the Code of Conduct only related to complaints about something that occurred within the last six months. The Interim Monitoring Officer explained that, for the completeness and accuracy of the information concerned, it was not practical to investigate complaints more than six months ago. Despite this, the Interim Monitoring Officer still undertook to investigate and resolve those complaints which were more than six months old on an informal basis. The Interim Monitoring Officer highlighted the importance of the role of political Group Leaders in resolving complaints since the Localism Act 2011 which abolished the Standards Board regime.

Members sought to improve the transparency of those complaints which were not brought to the Standards Committee. With this in mind, the Committee expressed a desire to review the Code of Conduct and terms of reference of the Standards Committee. The Interim Monitoring Officer advised Members that the timing of such a review would be more prudent when a permanent appointment had been made to the position of Monitoring Officer.

The Committee discussed the Code of Conduct training arrangements in place for Members, the Member/officer protocol and the nature of the complaints typically received by the Interim Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

The Meeting closed at 7.32 pm