

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Monday, 15 October 2012

PRESENT: Councillor Yates (Chair); Councillor Capstick (Deputy Chair); Councillors Flavell, Oldham, Patel and Sargeant

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Davies, Eales and Glynane.

2. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

None.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

None.

5. CO-OPTION OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS AND PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer Submitted a report that recommended the appointment of two Independent Members and two Parish Councils representatives to the Committee.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That Trevor Morris and Zillah Turner be co-opted on to the Committee as non-voting Independent Members; and
 2. That the appointment by co-option of two Parish Councillors to the Committee be agreed, one to be David Hughes and that the Borough Secretary be authorised to make the second appointment on its behalf.

6. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer submitted a report that set out the process undertaken to recruit an "Independent Person" in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 (the "Act") and to propose that the Standards Committee recommend to Council the appointment of an Independent Person.

RESOLVED: That the process followed by the Borough Secretary as stipulated by the Act to recruit an Independent Person be noted.

- RECOMMENDED:**
1. That Council approves the appointment of Ian Harley as an Independent Person; and
 2. That Council note that the Independent Person will be paid an allowance equal to that which was paid to the Independent Chair of the previous statutory Standards Committee.

7. TRAINING ON THE NEW STANDARDS ARRANGEMENTS

The Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer stated that the new standards regime brought about by the Localism Act 2011 was very different from the old system: for example, prejudicial interests were replaced by pecuniary interests. The Act also introduced some criminal aspects. Accordingly, he planned to provide training for all Councillors to be run by an external facilitator and paid for from within existing budgets. Tentatively, arrangements were being made to hold the training on 19 November 2012. There would be an afternoon session, probably from 3.00pm to 5.00pm and an evening session from 6.00pm to 8.00pm so as to give Councillors a choice. Parish Councillors would also be invited to attend.

In answer to a question the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer commented that the proposed date for training would not impact adversely in terms of timescale upon any cases that were currently being processed in respect of members of the Committee being adequately trained to take part in any hearing that might result. He commented that more specific training for Committee members could be arranged following the general training on 19 November.

- RESOLVED:**
1. That the arrangements for the general training of Councillors on 19 November 2012 as described by the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer be noted and that members of the Committee promote attendance at one of the sessions with members of their Groups.
 2. That following the general training on 19 November 2012 members of the Committee contact the Borough Secretary and Monitoring Officer or the Chair if there are any outstanding issues they would like further training on with the intention that this extra training be provided earlier in the day of the next Committee meeting on 10 December 2012.

The meeting concluded at 17.37 hours.

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