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## NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

### STANDARDS COMMITTEE

29 June 2023

**PRESENT:** - Cllr N Poole (Chairman)

Cllr M Ali, Cllr A Davison, Cllr A Ellerby, Cllr R Ogg, Cllr C Ross and Cllr D Wells

Mr R Johnson, Independent Person.

The meeting was held in room F36, Church Square House.

455 **SUBSTITUTIONS (IF ANY)**

Cllrs Davison and Ellerby substituted for Cllrs O’Sullivan and Swift.

456 **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND PERSONAL OR PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests or personal or personal and prejudicial interests.

457 **TO TAKE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 MARCH 2023 AS A CORRECT RECORD AND AUTHORISE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN.**

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the meeting of this committee held on 15 March 2023, having been printed and circulated amongst the members, be taken as read and correctly recorded and be signed by the chairman.

458 **STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23**

The Director: Governance & Communities submitted the draft Annual Report of the Standards Committee, under the council’s standards regime and the Localism Act, covering the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

In the draft Annual Report the Monitoring Officer referred to the number of complaints in 2022/23, and described which complaints were considered by an Assessment Panel, and which were determined by the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Independent Person.

In the report, the Monitoring Officer informed the Standards Committee that, further to the training in previous years, an additional online training session had been hosted on 29 March 2022 for newly elected/co-opted councillors and newly-employed clerks of Town and Parish Councils. This session had been well-attended, and annual training would continue to be provided, including online or virtual sessions.

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The Annual Report confirmed that the Monitoring Officer continued to meet regularly with his counterpart at North East Lincolnshire Council, the East Riding and Northern Lincolnshire Local Councils Association (ERNLLCA), and the Independent Persons, to review existing practice and keep abreast of national and regional developments.

The council continued to be a member of the Standards Exchange, a specialist website set up by practitioners as a platform to share good practice and to keep updated on national standards related developments.

**Resolved** – (a) That the 2022/23 Annual Report be approved, (b) that the Annual Report be circulated to all Town and Parish Councils in the North Lincolnshire area, (c) that the Annual Report be submitted to council, in accordance with the Annual Governance Statement; and (d) that the Independent Persons be thanked for their time, hard work, and commitment to supporting and advising the Standards Committee.

459 **NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL / HUMBERSIDE POLICE DRAFT PROTOCOL**

The Director: Governance & Communities submitted a report which described work undertaken by the Monitoring officer to agree and implement a draft protocol for assessing and reporting incidents of abuse, intimidation, and harassment to Humberside Police's Single Point of Contact.

The Monitoring Officer explained that this built upon work by the Standards Committee throughout the year to ensure that councillors were supported in their roles, and that action could be taken to tackle abuse.

A short protocol between North Lincolnshire Council and Humberside Police was submitted, intended to facilitate the reporting of serious incidents. This included a concise form for members or any officers working closely with elected councillors to complete and send through to the police, where appropriate.

**Resolved** – (a) That the Standards Committee approve the draft protocol and reporting form, pending comments and feedback from Humberside Police, and (b) that a further report be submitted to the Standards Committee's next meeting.

460 **ANNUAL STANDARDS TRAINING - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Director: Governance & Communities updated the Committee on the Monitoring Officer's intention to host two standards training sessions for councillors and clerks on 6 and 7 September 2023. In addition, work was underway to develop a short, online standards training package which would be made available to all town and parish councils.

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**Resolved** – That the situation be noted, and that all clerks and councillors be invited to attend either of the planned sessions.

461 **COMPLAINTS SCHEDULE - UPDATE.**

The Director: Governance & Communities submitted a report updating the Standards Committee on progress made on all outstanding complaints and investigations, and any relevant issues related to the Complaints Schedule.

**Resolved** – That the schedule be noted.

462 **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH MUST BE SPECIFIED.**

There were no urgent or additional items for consideration at the meeting.

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