

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Renewal of Dispensation

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To consider renewing the dispensation granted to all members by the committee on 6 November 2015, subsequently renewed every year, concerning motions relating to British Steel (formerly TATA Steel).

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At its meeting on 6 November 2015, the committee granted a dispensation to enable all members of the council to participate in a motion concerning TATA Steel, now British Steel, at the meeting of full council on 10 November 2015.
- 2.2 This dispensation was extended for a further 12 months each November since, and renewed again by the committee at their meeting on 11 November 2020 to enable all members to continue to discuss and debate issues relating to the steel industry.
- 2.3 The terms of the dispensation granted by the committee in November 2015 and renewed by the committee every year since were as follows:

“The committee, exceptionally, considered it appropriate that a dispensation be granted to all members of the council to participate in the debate and vote on this motion pursuant to section 33 (2) (c) of the Localism Act 2011 and any related motions or items that come before the council for consideration. This dispensation to apply for a period of twelve months unless rescinded earlier by the committee.”

Minutes 116, 170, 192, 236, 288 and 310 of the committee refers.

- 2.4 The committee recognised that many members of the council were either past or present employees of the steel industry or had family members

and friends who were, and as such the motion may give rise to declaration requirements under the council's Code of Conduct. Notwithstanding, the committee, exceptionally, considered that all members should be free to participate in debates and contribute their knowledge and experience of the steel industry so as to ensure the fullest debate in the interests of the residents of North Lincolnshire.

2.5 The dispensation has been utilised a number of times, most recently during an Extraordinary Meeting of Council on 28 June 2019 where Council unanimously passed a joint motion in support of the steel industry, its workforce, and the wider community.

2.6 The renewed dispensation is due to expire on 11 November 2021 and the purpose of this report is for the committee to consider whether it should be renewed again, in light of the continuing interest in British Steel, and the likelihood that the council will continue to receive reports and debate items on its progress.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 To further renew the dispensation granted by the committee on 6 November 2015 and renewed on 23 November 2016, 22 November 2017, November 2018, 13 November 2019, and 11 November 2020.

3.2 Not to renew the dispensation granted by the committee on 6 November 2015 and renewed on 23 November 2016, 22 November 2017, 21 November 2018, 13 November 2019 and 11 November 2020.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 To renew the dispensation would remove any ambiguity over the position and ensure that members that may have interests remain unhindered by the declaration requirements from fully participating in any debates concerning British Steel.

4.2 Not to renew the dispensation may impede the ability of the council to fully debate matters concerning British Steel, contrary to the interests of the residents of North Lincolnshire.

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

5.1 There are no financial or other resource implications arising from this report.

6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

6.1 British Steel is a key partner and an important employer in North Lincolnshire. As such, there are links with the Council Plan and it would be beneficial for members to be allowed to freely discuss relevant issues.

6.2 There are no equalities issues arising from this report.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 Not applicable.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 As of the date of this report no conflict of interests have been identified.

8.2 All Independent Persons and the Group Secretaries of both political groups have been consulted on the contents of this report.

9. RECOMMENDATION

9.1 That pursuant to section 33 (2) (c) of the Localism Act 2011 the dispensation granted by the Committee on 6 November 2015, subsequently renewed on 23 November 2016, 22 November 2017, 21 November 2018, 13 November 2019 and 11 November 2020 be renewed for a further twelve month period.

DIRECTOR: GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIPS

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Minute 116 of the Standards Committee of 6 November 2015.

Minute 156 of the Standards Committee of 13 July 2016.

Minute 170 of the Standards Committee of 23 November 2016.

Minute 192 of the Standards Committee on 22 November 2017.

Minute 236 of the Standards Committee on 21 November 2018.

Minute 288 of the Standards Committee on 13 November 2019.

Minute 310 of the Standards Committee on 11 November 2020.