

At a Meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kilworthy Park, Drake Road, **TAVISTOCK** on **TUESDAY** the **16<sup>th</sup>** day of **JULY 2013** at **10.00 am**.

**Present:**

Cllr J McInnes – Chairman	
Cllr D M Horn – Vice-Chairman	
Cllr S C Bailey	Cllr R E Baldwin
Cllr A Clish-Green	Cllr M V L Ewings
Cllr A F Leech	Cllr J B Moody
Cllr P J Ridgers	

Monitoring Officer  
Committee & Ombudsman Link Officer

**In attendance:** Mr G Barnicott – Independent Person  
Mr M Gleed – Independent Person

**\*SC 1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**SC 2 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The Monitoring Officer presented the Annual Report of the Standards Committee (page 2 to the Agenda). This was the first Annual Report of the Standards Committee since its appointment in July 2012 following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011. This Act abolished the previous standards regime in its entirety, including the Council's previous Standards Committee. The new rules governing standards became effective on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012.

The First Annual Report, presented under the new regime, covered the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 and was presented as Appendix A to the officer's report (page 4 to the Agenda).

The First Annual Report detailed the Membership of the Committee, the role and function of the Standards Committee and Hearing Panel, the number of complaints received during the period of the report, advice, policy and procedures and the Standards Committee's budget.

It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND** that the First Annual Report be presented to Council for noting.

**\*SC 3 TRAINING, INCLUDING INDEPENDENT PERSONS**

The Monitoring Officer tabled two papers as part of her presentation on training with the first being a print-out of a Powerpoint display entitled "The Code and Standards – one year on" and the second the procedure note entitled "Dealing with Standards Complaints".

Arising from the presentation, the Committee was advised that a hearing was pending, probably being held in September, for which further specific training would be given.

Arising from the discussion, the Committee expressed the view that the declaration of interests, whether personal or of a disclosable pecuniary nature, was the area in which Members were most vulnerable together with predetermination and bias (which sits outside the Code), particularly for those who were members of the Planning & Licensing Committee.

It was agreed that the matter of interests be a suitable topic for one of the Planning & Licensing Committee's training sessions held following a meeting of that Committee.

Further to the discussion on the Committee's Annual Report, it was noted that three complaints had been received since 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012. The outcome of two of those was 'no further action' and one had been referred for investigation which was proceeding to a hearing. It was further noted that the Town and Parish Councils were responsible for adopting their own local Codes and many had adopted the Borough Council's Code of Conduct and others had adopted the National Association of Parish Councils' Code of Conduct. Whilst formal complaints about parish councillors must still be referred to the Borough Council, Clerks were now encouraged to give preliminary advice to Parish Councils. The Monitoring Officer will report back to a future meeting of the Committee on the frequency and nature of the advice given.

(The Meeting terminated at 11.15 am.)