
Meeting	Joint Standards Committee - Assessments Sub-Committee
Date	26 June 2023
Present	Councillors Fisher and Lomas (CYC Members) Councillor Chambers (Parish Council Member) Mr Leigh (Independent Person)
Officer in Attendance	Frances Harrison – Deputy Monitoring Officer

1. Appointment of Chair (13:31)

That Cllr Fisher be appointed as Chair of the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest (13:32)

Members were asked to declare at this point in the meeting any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registerable interests they might have in respect of business on the agenda, if they had not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

No interests were declared, but for the sake of transparency Cllr Lomas indicated that she had a connection to two of the people named in the private reports which would not affect her decision and which she would expand upon in the private session. Cllr Fisher made a similar statement with regard to one of the people named in the private reports.

3. Exclusion of Press and Public (13:33)

Resolved: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the private reports at Agenda Items 4, 5 and 6 (Code of Conduct Complaints received in respect of two Parish Councillors and a City of York Councillor), on the grounds that they contain information relating to individuals and information likely to reveal the identity of individuals, which is classed as exempt under paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as

amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

[Note: following the above resolution, the Deputy Monitoring Officer confirmed that she had nothing further to add in respect of the public reports in the agenda papers, and the remainder of the meeting took place in private session.]

4. Code of Conduct Complaint received in respect of a Parish Councillor (13:34)

Members considered a report which set out a Code of Conduct complaint received in respect of a Parish Councillor. Details of the complaint were presented in the private report referred to in Minute 3 above.

Members were asked to decide whether to:

- A. rule that the complaint is out of scope, or
- B. rule that the complaint is in scope and choose either to:
 - i) take no further action
 - ii) seek to resolve the matter informally, or
 - iii) refer the matter for investigation.

Having considered all the information provided, and the advice of the Independent Person at the meeting, it was

Resolved: That Option B(iii) be approved and the matter be referred for investigation.

Reason: The Sub-Committee considers that this matter is capable of being a breach of the Code of Conduct and that an investigation is required.

5. Code of Conduct Complaint received in respect of a Parish Councillor (13:41)

Members considered a report which set out a Code of Conduct complaint received in respect of a Parish Councillor. Details of the complaint were presented in the private report referred to in Minute 3 above.

Members were asked to decide whether to:

- A. rule that the complaint is out of scope, or
- B. rule that the complaint is in scope and choose either to:
 - i) take no further action

- ii) seek to resolve the matter informally, or
- iii) refer the matter for investigation.

Having considered all the information provided, and the advice of the Independent Person at the meeting, it was

Resolved: That Option B(ii) be approved and the matter be resolved informally by way of a written apology.

Reason: The Sub-Committee considers that, although the matter is capable of being a breach of the Code of Conduct, in the circumstances of the case an informal resolution is the best way forward.

6. Code of Conduct Complaint received in respect of a City of York Councillor (13:48)

Members considered a report which set out a Code of Conduct complaint received in respect of a City of York Councillor. Details of the complaint were presented in the private report referred to in Minute 3 above.

Members were asked to decide whether to:

- A. rule that the complaint is out of scope, or
- B. rule that the complaint is in scope and choose either to:
 - i) take no further action
 - ii) seek to resolve the matter informally, or
 - iii) refer the matter for investigation.

Having considered all the information provided, and the advice of the Independent Person at the meeting, it was

Resolved: (i) That Option A be approved and the complaint be ruled out of scope.

Reason: The Sub-Committee does not consider that there has been a potential breach of the Code in this case, as the subject member was not acting in their capacity as a councillor.

- (ii) That a letter be sent to political groups suggesting guidelines on the standards of behaviour expected from Members in public, including on social media.

Reason: To prevent similar complaints in the future.

Cllr T Fisher, Chair

[The meeting started at 1.32 pm and finished at 2.02 pm].