
Meeting	Joint Standards Committee
Date	23 November 2021
Present	Councillor Rawlings (Parish Council Member, Vice Chair, in the Chair) Councillors Douglas and Carr (CYC Members) Councillor M Waudby (Parish Council Member) Mr Laverick (Independent Person)
Apologies	Councillors Rowley BEM (Chair), Baker and Fisher (CYC Members) Councillor Chambers (Parish Council Member) Ms Davies (Independent Person)

30. **Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial interests or disclosable pecuniary interests which they might have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

31. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Standards Committee held on 23 September 2021 be approved, and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

32. **Minutes of Sub-Committees**

Resolved: That the minutes of the following meetings of the Joint Standards sub-committees be approved, and signed by the Chair as a correct record in each case:

- Hearings Sub-Committee - meetings held on 31 August 2021, 7 September 2021 and 30 September 2021.
- Assessments Sub-Committee - meeting held on 30 September 2021 (*subject to 'option A' in*

Resolution (i) under Minute 20 being amended to 'option B').

33. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Gwen Swinburn spoke on Agenda Item 6 (Model Code of Conduct – Review of Procedures). She suggested a number of changes to the draft procedures, including a provision to refer complaints about the Leader and senior Members for external review.

34. Model Code of Conduct - Review of Procedures

Members considered a report which presented an update from Hoey Ainscough on their review of the council's procedures for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints.

The review had been requested by Members at the last meeting of the committee. Paul Hoey and Natalie Ainscough were in attendance to present the draft procedures, which were attached at Annex A to the report, and respond to Members' questions. They confirmed that:

- the procedures had been circulated to political groups, but only one minor amendment had been made;
- in paragraph 11 of the document, 'substantially similar' meant nearly identical and 'seriously ill' meant terminally ill or long-term hospitalised;
- the inclusion of 'politically motivated' in the list of factors in paragraph 11d was a government requirement.

Members went on to debate the procedures in detail, during which they agreed a number of amendments to the draft and raised other related issues.

Resolved: (i) That the following amendments be made to the draft procedures at Annex A to the report:

- paragraph 4 - remove the 2nd sentence;
- insert a new paragraph requiring the MO to keep a record of all decisions, including the process followed';
- paragraphs 5 & 6 - re-word to clarify and strengthen actions to be taken in the event

of a conflict of interest, in accordance with Members' comments;

- paragraph 8 – insert '*or Vice-Chair*' after 'Chair' in the last sentence;
- paragraph 11 – in sub-paragraphs f. and g, delete '*a substantially similar*' and insert '*the same*';
- paragraph 14 – delete '*periodically*' and insert '*at every meeting*';
- paragraph 17 – insert the following sentence at the end: '*If the MO and IP are not in agreement, they will refer the case to the Joint Standards Committee or the Chair*';
- paragraph 19 - delete '*a substantially similar*' and insert '*the same*'.

(ii) That Hoey Ainscough be requested to draw up the following additional draft documents to accompany the procedures:

- a flow chart detailing how the procedures were developed;
- the procedure for the point of view of a subject member;
- a set of procedures for complaints hearings;
- guidance on conflicts of interest;
- a protocol for referral of complaints to the police;
- a 'job description' for the Independent Persons.

(iii) That Hoey Ainscough also be invited to review the council's Member / Officer protocol and consider how it sits with the other procedural documents.

(iv) That the amended draft procedures and accompanying documents be brought back to the committee in January 2022.

Reason: To ensure that all issues discussed at the meeting are covered, and to enable the committee to review the documents before they are agreed.

(iv) That the following items also be added to the committee's work plan for the January meeting:

- Update on the Planning Code of Good Practice;
- Proposed amendments to the terms of reference.

Reason: To ensure that these matters are picked up as part of the committee's planned programme of work.

Cllr S Rawlings, Chair

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 7.04 pm.