

Meeting	Joint Standards Committee Hearings Sub-Committee
Date	16 January 2019
Present	Councillor Kramm (Chair) (CYC Member) Councillors Thornton (Substitute) and Wiseman (Parish Council Members)
In Attendance	Mr Laverick (Independent Person)
Apologies	Councillor Hayes

5. Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests, or any disclosable pecuniary interests, that they might have in the business on the agenda. No interests were declared.

6. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item 3 (Complaint about a Member of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee), on the grounds that it includes information relating to an individual, which is classed as exempt under paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

7. Urgent Business - Public Participation

The Chair reported that there had been two requests to speak at the meeting, in the light of which he had agreed to exercise his discretion and include Public Participation on the agenda under urgent business. The agenda had been re-published online to include this item.

Gwen Swinburn expressed the view that the Standards process was 'unfit for purpose' and that custom and practice needed to be regularised.

Cllr Carr made comments on problems with the process generally and the handling of this case in particular.

Both speakers then left the meeting prior to consideration of the next item.

8. Complaint against a Member of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee - Discussion of Procedural Issues

Members considered a report on issues relating to the proposed hearing of a complaint against a member of a council covered by the Joint Standards Committee.

Members had initially considered this complaint while sitting as an Assessments Sub-Committee on 1 and 8 August. As they were taking decisions in lieu of the Monitoring Officer in this case, the current meeting gave them an opportunity to review the pre-hearing responses received at the previous meeting and determine:

- Whether there was now sufficient information to decide, without the need for a full hearing, if there had been a breach of the code or not;
- Whether the investigation should be re-opened; or
- Whether the matter should still proceed to a hearing.

Having taken into account the views of the Independent Person, it was

Resolved: (i) That the matter not proceed to a hearing and that no further action be taken.

Reason: The Sub-Committee accepts the conclusion of the Investigating Officer that there has been no breach of the Code of Conduct in this case, and this view has not been altered by the content of the additional information received.

Cllr L Kramm, Chair

[The meeting started at 4.30 pm and finished at 6.35 pm].