

At a meeting of the Standards Committee held in Council Chamber - Allerdale House on Wednesday 12 February 2014 at 1.00 pm

Members

J Wood (Chairman)

C Armstrong
D Birch
P Burns

D S Fairbairn
C Smith
S Standage

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I McCambridge, T North, G Scott and J Wright

Staff Present

B Carlin, D Devine and J Price-Jones

466 Procedural Rule 22.2

Councillor Hilary Harrington attended the meeting under Procedural Rule 22.2

467 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

468 Declaration of interests

5. Complaint 2013/N003, 2013/N004 and 2013/N005.

Town Cllr Carole Armstrong; Other Interest; Due to her name being mentioned in Appendix 1 - 'Bullies and Liars' leaflet.

6. Complaint 2013/N009.

Councillor Janice Wood; Other Interest; Due to being a friend of the Councillor who the complaint is against and due to being present at a meeting referred to in the complaint.

469 Questions

None received.

470 Complaint 2013/N003, 2013/N004 and 2013/N005

The Standards Committee met to consider complaints received against Councillor Stephen Stoddart of Workington Town Council alleging that he had breached Workington Town Council's Code of Conduct.

Councillor Stoddart was not present at the meeting although members were informed that he had been invited to attend.

The Standards Committee considered the evidence contained within the Investigating Officer's report. After a consideration of evidence, the Standards Committee felt that the following provisions of Workington Town Council's Code of Conduct were relevant:

1 Paragraph 5(3)

You must not disclose any information given to you as a member in breach of any confidence

2 Paragraph 5(4)

You must not bring your office or the Council into disrepute

The Standards Committee found that Councillor Stephen Stoddart had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct and agreed that the following actions be taken:

- That Workington Town Council be recommended to arrange Code of Conduct Training for Councillor Stoddart
- That a press release be sent out, disclosing the decision of the Standards Committee in relation to the complaints received against Councillor Stoddart
- A decision notice resulting from the Standards Committee's findings be sent to both Councillor Stoddart and the clerk of Workington Town Council

Agreed – That:

- a) Workington Town Council be recommended to arrange Code of Conduct Training for Councillor Stoddart
- b) the Deputy Monitoring Officer send out a press release, disclosing the decision of the Standards Committee in relation to the complaints received against Councillor Stoddart
- c) the Deputy Monitoring Officer send out a decision notice to both Councillor Stoddart and the clerk of Workington Town Council

471 Complaint 2013/N009

The Standards Committee considered how to deal with a complaint that had been received.

The Chair, Deputy Monitoring Officer and Independent Person were required to meet informally to determine whether there were grounds to take the complaint to the Standards Committee or not however the Chair had declared an interest in this complaint.

The Standards Committee had to decide on who would meet with the Independent Person and Deputy Monitoring Officer in the Chair's place.

It was decided that Councillor Christine Smith would meet with the Deputy Monitoring Officer and the Independent Person in Councillor Janice Wood's

place in order to determine whether there were grounds to take the complaint to the Standards Committee or not.

Agreed – That Councillor Christine Smith attends an informal meeting with the Deputy Monitoring Officer and the Independent Person so that it could be determined whether to escalate a complaint that had been received to the Standards Committee or not.

The meeting closed at 2.05 pm