

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Standards Committee** held in the **Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil on Tuesday 6 September 2022.**

(2.00 pm - 2.55 pm)

**Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Nicola Clark (Chairman)

**District Councillors:** Jenny Kenton, Pauline Lock, Sue Osborne (from 2.10pm) and Martin Wale.

**Independent Persons:** Christopher Borland (online via Zoom) and Peter Forrester

### Officers

Jill Byron	District Solicitor & Monitoring Officer
Angela Cox	Specialist (Democratic Services)
Michelle Mainwaring	Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)
Becky Sanders	Case Officer (Strategy & Support Services)

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#### 1. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the previous meeting (informal and virtual) held on 1 March 2022, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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#### 2. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hayward Burt. Councillor Martin Wale was present as substitute for Councillor Burt.

Councillor Sue Osborne had tendered an apology for late attendance due to being in another council meeting.

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#### 3. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

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#### 4. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

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#### 5. Update on Matters considered at the Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 5)

The Monitoring Officer provided members with an update regarding matters considered at the previous meeting, including:

New Member Code of Conduct - this had now been adopted by Somerset County Council, and each of the district councils were due to consider adoption of the Code at their meetings in September. This would streamline the Code across Somerset reading for vesting day of the new unitary authority.

Training for Committee Chairs - an online session was arranged in June and multiple members attended. The session had been recorded in case other members might be interested who had been unable to attend or if anyone wanted a refresher.

Review of the Code of Conduct Complaints Process - this work was now part of the work being undertaken by the governance workstream as part of the transition arrangements to the new Somerset Council. A further update would be provided to the next meeting of Standards Committee.

Recording of Meetings - this work was now also forming part of on-going work being undertaken by the governance workstream as part of the transition arrangements to the new Somerset Council. A further update would be provided to the next meeting of Standards Committee.

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## 6. **Standards Committee Forward Plan (Agenda Item 6)**

The Monitoring Officer presented the Forward Plan as detailed in the agenda. There was no discussion, and members were content to note the Forward Plan.

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## 7. **Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 7)**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Standards Committee was scheduled for 2.00pm on Tuesday 6 December 2022, at the Council Offices, Brympton Way.

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## 8. **Exclusion of Press and Public (Agenda Item 8)**

**RESOLVED:** That the following items (agenda items 9 and 10) be considered in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under paragraphs 1 and 2: Information relating to any individual; and Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

*(Voting: Unanimous)*

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## 9. **Verbal Update on Complaints about Members Conduct (Confidential) (Agenda Item 9)**

In confidential session, the Monitoring Officer provided members with a verbal update on complaints received relating to potential breaches of the Code of Conduct.

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**10. Consideration of a Complaint about Member Conduct (Confidential)  
(Agenda Item 10)**

In confidential session, the Monitoring Officer consulted the Standards Committee and the Independent Members on the next steps in a particular case, and members provided their points of view. During discussion members suggested and agreed some recommendations including potential training, a possible briefing note and some additional standardised text to be added to specific agenda reports.

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Chairman