

**Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee
held on 29th October 2014 at Pippbrook, Dorking
from 7.00pm to 7.47pm**

Present: Councillors Charles Yarwood (Chairman), Paul Elderton (Vice-Chairman), Mary Cooper, Roger Hammond (Parish Representative), Roger Hurst, Howard Jones, Stuart McLachlan (Parish Representative) and John Northcott.

5. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 17th June 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. Disclosure of Interests

Councillor John Northcott declared a non pecuniary interest in **Agenda Item 5 – Mole Valley District Council’s Members’ Planning Code of Good Conduct**, as he was Executive Member for Planning, but was not required to leave the meeting during consideration thereof.

7. Annual Report on Complaints on Breaches of the Members’ Code of Conduct

The Committee received a report set out on pages 5 to 8 of the agenda and were asked to note the Appendix setting out the details of all complaints received concerning the conduct of District and Parish Councils’ Members whether or not a breach of the Code of Conduct was found.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted the Appendix setting out details of all complaints received concerning the conduct of Members of the District and Parish Councils.

8. Mole Valley District Council’s Members’ Planning Code of Good Conduct

The Committee received a report set out on pages 9 to 22 and were asked to consider the amended Code and recommend its adoption by the Council, subject to any further amendments.

Members made various detailed comments in relation to the amendments to the Planning Code of Good Practice, on issues such as lobbying, legal requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and the speaking rights of Members.

The Committee agreed that due to the number of changes suggested at the meeting, the Monitoring Officer should be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, the Executive Member for Planning, and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Development Control Committee, to make appropriate amendments to the Code.

The revised Code would be presented to the Council at its meeting in January 2015 alongside other amendments that needed to be agreed to the Council's Constitution.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That the revised Members’ Planning Code of Good Practice Code, as amended by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chairman of Standards Committee, the Executive Member for Planning, and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Development Control Committee, be adopted.

9. Mole Valley District Council’s Independent Person Protocol and re-appointment of Independent Persons

The Committee received a report set out on pages 23 to 29 of the agenda and were asked to consider the protocol for the Independent Persons and to recommend its

adoption by the Council subject to any amendments the Committee wished to make, and recommend to Council the re-appointment of the three Independent Persons for a period of four years from the Annual Council meeting in May 2015.

There was some discussion amongst Members regarding the change to the appointment of the Independent Persons from three to four years; it was confirmed by Officers that this would be in line with the other local authorities in Surrey who used the same Independent Persons for consultation in connection with an allegation that a Member had breached the Code of Conduct.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That

- (i) the protocol for the Independent Persons be adopted; and
- (ii) the three Independent Persons be re-appointed for a period of four years from the Annual Council meeting in May 2015.

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Chairman

Date: