

WEST DEVON STANDARDS COMMITTEE



West Devon
Borough
Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **West Devon Standards Committee** held on **Tuesday, 10th March, 2020 at 10.00 am** at the **Chamber - Kilworthy Park**

Present: **Councillors:**

Chairman Cllr Leech
Vice Chairman Cllr Davies

Cllr Musgrave

Cllr Yelland

In attendance:

Councillors:
Cllr Edmonds

Officers:
Monitoring Officer
Deputy Monitoring Officer
Senior Specialist – Democratic Services

1. **Apologies for absence**
* SC 1
An apology for absence was received from Cllr T Bolton.
2. **Confirmation of Minutes**
* SC 2
The Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 12 March 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.
3. **Declaration of Interest**
* SC 3
The Chairman invited Members to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting but there were none made.
4. **Annual Report (2019-2020)**
* SC 4
The Committee considered its Annual Report for the period April 2019 to March 2020.

Following an introduction from the lead Hub Committee Member, a debate ensued and particular reference was made to:-

- (a) Member Training. Whilst recognising the role of the Member Development Steering Group in leading on the Member Learning and Development Plan, the Committee asked that the following views be reported to the next Group meeting:
 - There was a need to check if there were any Members who had still to complete the training that had been identified as being 'compulsory' following the May 2019 Elections;
 - In light of the changing nature of the Member role, the Committee felt that there was a need to include a session on the Learning and Development Plan in relation to Conflict Management and Resolution; and
 - The importance of Members being in receipt of regular Planning and Code of Conduct Refresher training sessions was reiterated;
- (b) the contents of the report issued in 2019 by the Committee on Standards in Public Life. Members welcomed the proposal to increase the sanctions that were available to the Standards Committee. The Members considered that additional sanctions would have the potential to protect other Members and town and parish council clerks and felt it to be important that all Members familiarised themselves with the content of this report;
- (c) a revised draft model Code of Conduct. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that, as and when it was published, a revised draft Code would be subject to a full consultation exercise before any changes were recommended to Council;
- (d) the role of the Independent Persons. The comments of the Monitoring Officer that the working arrangement whereby the five Independent Persons were shared with South Hams District Council was proving to be very successful were welcomed by the Committee;
- (e) monthly reports to the Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Committee asked that the practice be reinstated whereby the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee be in receipt of monthly progress reports that indicate the number of unresolved standards complaints (separated by Borough and Town/Parish Council).

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the Annual Report has been considered by the Committee and commented upon as recorded in the minutes above; and
2. the Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman be in receipt of monthly progress reports that indicate the number of unresolved

standards complaints (separated by Borough and Town/Parish Council).

The Meeting concluded at 10.55 am

Signed by:

Chairman
