

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Standards Committee was held on Wednesday 11 May 2022.

PRESENT: Councillors , M Saunders (Vice-Chair), S Dean, S Hill, J Hobson, D Rooney, J Rostron and M Storey

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: J Race (Independent Person) and D Hayward (Wilkin Chapman LLP Solicitors)

OFFICERS: C Benjamin, A Hoy, S Lightwing, J McNally and S Reynolds

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors T Mawston and S Walker

21/32 **WELCOME AND EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair chaired the meeting. The Vice Chair welcomed all present and read out the Building Evacuation Procedure.

21/33 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest at this point in the meeting.

21/34 **MINUTES- STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 26 APRIL 2022**

The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 26 April 2022 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

21/35 **PROCEDURE FOR A STANDARDS COMMITTEE HEARING**

A copy of the Procedure for a Standards Committee Hearing had been provided as Agenda Item 5 for Members' information.

21/36 **ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED**

The Subject Member of the complaint was absent and due consideration was given by Committee Members as to whether to adjourn or proceed with the meeting. The Monitoring Officer provided information in relation to communications with the Subject Member throughout the Members' Code of Conduct Complaint process.

ORDERED that the meeting would proceed.

21/37 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chair sought the views of the Committee and the Monitoring Officer as to whether the complaint should be heard in public or private session.

ORDERED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that, if present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

21/38 **STANDARDS COMPLAINT REF: IKEN: 11230**

The Investigating Officer presented his report, a copy of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, regarding an investigation which had been undertaken in accordance with the prevailing legislation and guidance in relation to an allegation that Councillor McTigue had breached the Members' Code of Conduct in that she did not respect others, conducted herself in a manner which was likely to bring the Authority, Office or the Member into disrepute and

did not use social media responsibly.

A summary of the complaint, details of the relevant legislation, protocols and Members' Code of Conduct, the review process, findings of fact and conclusions were presented by the Investigating Officer.

Committee Members were given the opportunity to question the Investigating Officer in relation to his report.

The Monitoring Officer addressed the Committee's concerns regarding the time taken to process the complaint.

Having considered the Investigating Officer's report, the supporting documentation, the Investigating Officer's comments and questioning, the Committee considered the findings of fact, and based on those findings, whether Councillor McTigue had failed to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct.

The Independent Person was consulted and provided his views.

In regard to the allegations, the Standards Committee unanimously supported the findings of the Investigating Officer's Report. The Committee concluded that Councillor McTigue had breached the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of the complaints.

It was **ORDERED** that the following sanctions be imposed:

1. Councillor McTigue to provide a written apology to the Council employee who was the subject of the complaint, by 6 July 2022, with a copy provided to the Standards Committee.
2. Councillor McTigue to receive one-to-one training on the appropriate use of social media and the Member/Officer Protocol, to be provided by the relevant Council Officer(s), and this should be completed by 6 July 2022.
3. Councillor McTigue to be subject of a motion of public censure at the Council meeting scheduled for 6 July 2022.
4. Should sanctions 1 and 2 above not be completed within the stated timescale, Councillor McTigue would be subject to further public censure.