

Cherwell District Council

The Standards Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 17 March 2022 at 5.00 pm

Present:

Councillor John Donaldson (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mark Cherry
Councillor George Reynolds
Councillor Bryn Williams
Councillor Lucinda Wing

Substitute Members:

Councillor Andrew Beere (In place of Councillor Perran Moon)
Councillor Dorothy Walker (In place of Councillor Ian Middleton)

Also Present Virtually:

Tom Edwards – Independent Person

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Simon Holland
Councillor Ian Middleton
Councillor Perran Moon

Officers:

Lesley Farrell, Democratic and Elections Officer

Officers Present Virtually:

Shahin Ismail – Interim Monitoring Officer
Natasha Clark - Governance and Elections Manager

10 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

11 **Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no requests to address the meeting.

12 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

13 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 October 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements

15 **Adoption of Revised Councillors' Code of Conduct**

The Interim Monitoring Officer submitted a report which introduced a proposed revised Councillors' Code of Conduct for the Committee to recommend to Full Council, and to agree adoption and implementation from May 2022.

All Oxfordshire local authorities were currently covered by a single, jointly-agreed Code of Conduct which ensured that councillors who were members of multiple authorities within the area were covered by a single code, providing clarity and consistency. The same Members' Code of Conduct had been adopted by the majority of parish councils in the Cherwell District.

The revised Code of Conduct would be presented to the County Council and all District Councils in Oxfordshire, and, if adopted, would be recommended to all Oxfordshire Parishes.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Interim Monitoring Officer explained that training would be rolled out across the County and members of multiple authorities would attend one training session which would be co-ordinated across the County.

All Councillors would undertake training within 6 months of the adoption of the revised Code of Conduct and all Councillors (newly or re-elected) would undertake Code of Conduct training within 6 months of their election and would also undertake a refresher at least once during their term of office.

Resolved

- (1) That Full Council be recommended to adopt the revised Councillors' Code of Conduct.
- (2) That Full Council be recommended to agree that:
 - Subject to the adoption of the revised Code of Conduct, it be mandatory for all Councillors to complete Code of Conduct

training within 6 months of the adoption of the revised code (i.e. by mid-November).

- It be mandatory for all Councillors to undertake Code of Conduct training within 6 months of their election (newly or re-elected) and attend a refresher at least once during their term of office.
- (3) That Full Council be recommended to endorse the revised Councillors' Code of Conduct for adoption by Town and Parish Councils in the Cherwell District.

16 **Standards Arrangements - Appointment of Independent Person**

The Interim Monitoring Officer submitted a report which considered the arrangements for the appointment of an Independent Person in light of the resignation of a current Independent Person.

The Committee considered it appropriate to thank Graham Matthews for his service to Cherwell District Council as an Independent Person.

A Member of the Committee who was on the interview panel suggested that the third choice of candidate be approached in the first instance regarding the vacancy.

Resolved

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Interim Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Standards Committee, to liaise with the candidates who applied for the Independent Person vacancy in the autumn of 2021 and agree a preferred candidate to recommend to Council to be appointed for a term expiring on the date of December Council meeting in 2025.
- (2) That Mr Graham Matthews be thanked for his service and diligence as an Independent Person for Cherwell District Council

The meeting ended at 5.35 pm

Chairman:

Date: