

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

16 AUGUST 2017 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mrs R Camamile - Chairman

Mr RG Allen, Mrs MA Cook (for Mr CW Boothby), Mr WJ Crooks, Mr E Hollick (for Mr MB Cartwright), Mr M Nickerson, Mr LJP O'Shea and Ms BM Witherford

Also in attendance: Councillor M Hall (for the public session items); Mr G Grimes (Independent Person).

Officers in attendance: Julie Kenny and Rebecca Owen

102 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Boothby and Cartwright, with the substitution of Councillor Cook for Councillor Boothby and Councillor Hollick for Councillor Cartwright authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10.

103 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Councillor O'Shea, seconded by Councillor Nickerson and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2017 be confirmed and signed by the chairman.

104 ADDITIONAL URGENT BUSINESS BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Whilst not considered urgent business, attention was drawn to the request made at a previous meeting that a progress report on current complaints be brought to each meeting. Whilst it was acknowledged that this had not been included as the only ongoing complaints were those included in the agenda for this meeting, a member had made a request to the chairman that a statement of 'no updates' be included on the agenda if this was the case. The request was noted.

105 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor O'Shea declared a personal interest which might lead to bias in agenda item 14 (complaint 2017-06) and stated he would leave the meeting during consideration of this item.

106 DOMESTIC ABUSE WORKPLACE POLICY

The committee gave consideration to the refreshed Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy for the authority. It was reported that staff and unions had been consulted in preparation of the policy. A member highlighted that there was no mention of modern slavery and it was stated that the definitions mirrored the Home Office definition but agreed that this would be fed back to the author. A member thanked officers for their hard work in this area. It was moved by Councillor Allen, seconded by Councillor O'Shea and

RESOLVED – the Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy be approved.

107 PEOPLE STRATEGY 2017-2021

The People Strategy 2017-2021, which set out the strategic priorities for the workforce for the next four years, was presented to members.

A member suggested that there should be five themes listed in paragraph 3.3 of the report – the fifth being retention of staff.

Some discussion ensued on diversity and the risk of discriminating against applicants who did not have a disability when guaranteeing an interview if a disabled applicant meets the essential criteria for the role. Officers felt that this was a reasonable measure and emphasised that it only applied to the essential criteria, not desirable criteria.

A member drew attention to page 21 which referred to 40% of the annual leavers leaving due to resignation and queried the reasons for the other 60%. It was agreed that this would be clarified.

It was moved by Councillor Nickerson, seconded by Councillor Allen and

RESOLVED – the report be RECOMMENDED to Council for approval.

108 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS 2016-17

Members received an annual update on corporate complaints received under the council's two-stage process.

During discussion, the following points were raised:

- A member asked how the number of complaints not upheld compared with previous years, given the overall increase in the number of complaints. It was agreed that this information would be provided
- The high number of complaints in relation to housing repairs was discussed, and the reasons for these, which had now been resolved.

It was moved by Councillor O'Shea, seconded by Councillor Camamile and

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

109 STATUTORY SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Members received the Statutory Safety Committee minutes of 30 March 2017 for information.

A member asked whether there had been an increase in accidents and it was noted that this would be addressed in the minutes which would come to the next meeting.

Discussion ensued on excess waste and the health and safety reasons for this not being collected.

Councillor Hall left the meeting at 7pm.

110 MATTERS FROM WHICH THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED

On the motion of Councillor Camamile seconded by Councillor O'Shea, it was

RESOLVED – in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the following item of

business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 10 of Part I of Schedule 12A of that Act.

111 COMPLAINT 2017-03

Consideration was given to a complaint about Councillor Granger, Barwell Parish Council. It had been alleged that Councillor Granger had been verbally abusive towards a member of the public (the complainant) during a telephone conversation. It was noted that informal resolution had been explored but had not been possible to achieve.

Members felt that an investigation would not provide any additional information as it would be the complainant's word against the subject member's. It was, therefore, felt that Councillor Granger should be requested to send a written apology to the complainant. It was also requested that Councillor Granger be reminded to be mindful of his tone and the way he spoke to people in future.

It was moved by Councillor O'Shea, seconded by Councillor Crooks and

RESOLVED –

- (i) Councillor Granger be requested to send a written apology to the complainant;
- (ii) Councillor Granger be reminded to be mindful of the way he speaks to others;
- (iii) The report and decision be made public.

112 COMPLAINT 2017-04

The committee gave consideration to a complaint against Councillor Granger of Barwell Parish Council. It was alleged that Councillor Granger had been rude to a member of the public (the complainant) during a telephone conversation. It was noted that informal resolution had been explored but had not been achieved.

Members expressed concern about the number of calls Councillor Granger allegedly made to the complainant on the day of the aforementioned conversation. Concern was also expressed about individual parish councillors dealing with complaints and land use issues.

It was felt that an investigation would not provide any additional information as it would be the complainant's word against the subject member's. It was, therefore, felt that Councillor Granger should be requested to send a written apology to the complainant. It was also suggested that, given two similar complaints against Councillor Granger had been addressed at this meeting, the subject member be reminded of the Nolan Principles and that the parish council be requested to consider arranging training for him on dealing with people appropriately.

It was moved by Councillor O'Shea, seconded by Councillor Camamile and

RESOLVED –

- (i) Councillor Granger be requested to send a written apology to the complainant;
- (ii) Councillor Granger be reminded of the Nolan Principles;

- (iii) Barwell Parish Council be requested to consider providing training for Councillor Granger on dealing with people appropriately;
- (iv) The report and decision be made public.

113 COMPLAINT 2017-06

Having declared a personal interest which might lead to bias in this item, Councillor O'Shea left the meeting at 7.45pm.

Consideration was given to a fact finding report. The committee felt that the matter did fall under the code of conduct, may have been a breach of the code of conduct, and was of sufficient seriousness to be investigated. It was also felt that an independent external investigator should be appointed.

It was moved by Councillor Nickerson, seconded by Councillor Witherford and

RESOLVED –

- (i) Complaint 2017-06 be referred for investigation;
- (ii) An external investigator be sought.

(The Meeting closed at 8.04 pm)

CHAIRMAN