

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

10 OCTOBER 2023 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr A Pendlebury – Chair

Cllr RG Allen (for Cllr CM Allen), Cllr MC Bools (for Cllr MB Cartwright), Cllr SL Bray (for Cllr MJ Crooks), Cllr MA Cook, Cllr C Harris (for Cllr LJP O'Shea), Cllr L Hodgkins (for Cllr WJ Crooks), Cllr KWP Lynch and Cllr LJ Mullaney (for Cllr E Hollick)

Also in attendance: Mr G Grimes, Independent Person

Officers in attendance: Julie Kenny and Rebecca Owen

150. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors C Allen, Cartwright, J Crooks, W Crooks, Hollick and O'Shea, with the following substitutes authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10:

Councillor R Allen for Councillor C Allen
Councillor Bools for Councillor Cartwright
Councillor Bray for Councillor J Crooks
Councillor Harris for Councillor O'Shea
Councillor Hodgkins for Councillor W Crooks
Councillor L Mullaney for Councillor Hollick.

151. Minutes of previous meeting

It was moved by Councillor Cook, seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 2 August be confirmed as a correct record.

152. Declarations of interest

Councillor Allen declared a non-pecuniary interest as his company provided a financial service to a parish council of which one of the councillors subject to a complaint considered at the previous meeting was a member.

153. Social media policy and guidelines

Consideration was given to the updated social media guidance and best practice for employees and councillors. The importance of social media guidance in relation to the code of conduct was noted. It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Allen and

RESOLVED – the social media policy and guidelines for employees and members be approved.

154. Corporate complaints 2022/2023

Members received an annual report relating to corporate complaints. It was noted that the council had seen similar trends to other authorities but received relatively few complaints in comparison.

It was reported that since publication of the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's annual letter, a case had been concluded which had found fault in relation to the processing of a planning application and whilst the investigator had not concluded that the outcome of the application would have been any different had it not been for the errors made, recommendations had been made to review internal processes and record keeping. It was noted that the outcome of the review would be reported to Finance & Performance Scrutiny's December meeting.

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

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

155. Matters from which the public may be excluded

On the motion of Councillor Pendlebury seconded by Councillor Bools, 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.

156. Complaints update

The Monitoring Officer provided an update on code of conduct complaints, including two considered at the previous meeting.

In relation to complaint 2023/14, the subject member had not apologised and no response had been received to the Monitoring Officer's emails.

Similarly, no apology had been received in respect of 2023/15 and the subject member had made a complaint about way the matter had been handled. Members were disappointed with the bullying behaviour that had been perpetuated with these actions.

Members expressed frustration with the lack of willingness to apologise in both of these instances. In view of the fact that the government's intention with the current standards regime was that members should be accountable at the ballot box, members felt it was appropriate to make the information public. It was moved by Councillor Bools, seconded by Councillor Lynch and unanimously

RESOLVED – the decision notices for complaints 2023/14 and 2023/15 be published on the council's website and press releases be issued.

(The Meeting closed at 6.52 pm)

CHAIR