

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

02 February 2022

**Present** – Councillors Ireton (Chairman), Metcalfe, Solloway and Whitaker.

**Independent Persons (non-voting):** Roger Millin.

**Parish Representative (non-voting):** None.

**Officers** – Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer), Solicitor to the Council (Deputy Monitoring Officer) (Virtual) and Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer.

Apologies – Councillor Mercer.

Start: 6.30pm

Finish: 6.56pm

The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 21 July 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **Minutes for Report**

STN.390

#### **WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) submitted a report which invited Members to review the Whistleblowing Policy to ensure that it reflects best practice and remains fit for purpose.

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) highlighted that senior officers felt the current Policy remains fit for purpose and that due to local government reorganisation, the Committee should only undertake a 'light touch' review. One recommendation was made – that the Policy should be made gender neutral. It was suggested that Craven District Council's Whistleblowing Policy should be made available to the new authority and Parish Councils/Meetings after local government reorganisation.

**Resolved** – That the Whistleblowing Policy, once gender neutral, is fit for purpose. That the Policy will be made available to the new authority and Parish Councils/Meetings.

STN.391

#### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT & SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN REVIEW LETTER 2020/2021**

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) submitted the annual Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Review Letter 2020/2021 to the Committee.

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) highlighted that the complaint which resulted in a Public Interest Report was presented to Policy Committee as the Standards Committee has no budget to make the payments recommended.

Members commended officers for the large number of support grants paid during the COVID pandemic. The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) was asked to pass on the Committee's thanks. It was highlighted that no statistical data of the number and type of complaints received during the period, which did not progress to the Ombudsman, was presented, and Members asked The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) to present this information at the next meeting.

**Resolved** – That the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman Review Letter 2020/2021 is noted. That further statistical data of complaints received during the Review Letter period will be provided to the Standards Committee.

STN.392

### **PLANNING SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

The Solicitor to the Council (Deputy Monitoring Officer) presented a report which consulted members of the Committee on the proposed amendments to the Planning Scheme of Delegation.

It was highlighted that any recommendations made by the Committee would be passed on to the Audit and Governance Committee. Members asked for the number of applications brought to the Planning Committee by Members to be given to the Audit and Governance Committee as well as the Standards Committee. Members welcomed the proposed amendments.

**Resolved** – That the Planning Scheme of Delegation is noted. That the number of applications brought to the Planning Committee by Members will be given to the Audit and Governance and Standards Committees.

STN.393

### **MONITORING REPORT**

The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) submitted a report which updated Members on the Code of Conduct complaints received.

The Solicitor to the Council (Deputy Monitoring Officer) updated Members on complaint 2021/20, reporting that the Decision Notice had been issued and no further action was required. A verbal update was given to Members.

**Resolved** – That the Monitoring Report to date is noted.

*Chairman*