

Medway Council
Meeting of Councillor Conduct Committee
Wednesday, 22 January 2020
6.00pm to 6.48pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

- Present:** Councillors: Mrs Diane Chambers (Chairman), Howcroft-Scott, Kemp (Vice-Chairman), McDonald, Potter, Price and Tranter
- Substitutes:** Councillors:
Rupert Turpin (Substitute for Brake)
- In Attendance:** Jan Guylor, Head of Legal Services, Local Land Charges and Licensing/Deputy Monitoring Officer
Perry Holmes, Chief Legal Officer/Monitoring Officer
Teri Reynolds, Democratic Services Officer

591 Apologies for absence

An apology of absence was received from Councillor Brake.

592 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 6 November 2019 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

593 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

594 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

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Other interests

There were none.

595 Request for Dispensation

Discussion:

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report which informed the Committee of a request for a dispensation that had been received by the Monitoring Officer from a non-voting co-optee of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Decision:

The Committee agreed to grant a dispensation to Geoffrey Matthews for two years for the reasons set out in section 4 of the report to allow participation in debate on the annual schools performance report at Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings in which he has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in relation to his employment by Leigh Academies Trust at Strood Academy.

596 Exclusion of the press and public

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the exempt material relating to agenda item 7 because consideration of these matters in public would disclose information falling within Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as specified in agenda item 6, and, in all the circumstances of the case, the Committee considers that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

597 Screening of Complaint CCC/2019/002

Discussion:

The Monitoring Officer introduced a report which detailed four complaints received on 13 and 14 November 2019 relating to a Medway Councillor. The Committee considered the complaints as detailed in section 2 of the report, along with the full complaint submissions, which were appended to the report. The Committee also considered an email submitted to the Monitoring Officer by the Subject Member on 18 January 2020.

Decision:

The Committee decided that, given the subject member had apologised to three of the complainants, to take no further action in relation to the complaints by those three complainants, provided they confirmed to the Monitoring Officer that they accepted the apology as an informal resolution of their complaints.

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In relation to the complaint by the fourth complainant, the Committee considered that there was a potential breach of the Code of Conduct, in relation to Section 2 of the Code, relating to General Conduct.

It felt that the complaint was one which could be dealt with by a Political Group and therefore decided that the complaint be referred to the relevant group for resolution. The Committee also requested that the Leader of the Group report back to the Monitoring Officer on the outcome in due course.

Reasons:

The Committee wished to express its view that the behaviour complained about was appalling and unacceptable, however, it acknowledged that an apology had been provided to three of the four complainants. It felt that an apology should be provided to the fourth complainant and considered that the subject member needed to fully acknowledge that their behaviour had been unacceptable and would benefit from learning coping mechanisms to manage future situations.

Chairman

Date:

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