

Standards Committee

11 July 2016

Time 12.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Regulatory
Venue Council Chamber - 4th Floor - Civic Centre

Membership

Chair Cllr Barry Findlay (Con)
Vice-chair

Labour

Cllr Ian Brookfield
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Martin Waite

Conservative

Quorum for this meeting is two Councillors.

Information for the Public

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the democratic support team:

Contact Sara Goodwin
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Wolverhampton WV1 1RL

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Some items are discussed in private because of their confidential or commercial nature. These reports are not available to the public.

Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting** (Pages 3 - 4)
- 4 **Matters arising**

DECISION ITEMS

- 5 **Honorary Alderman**

To consider whether to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on former Councillor Bishan Dass and on former Councillor Richard Fredrick Whitehouse. (Report to follow)

Attendance

Members of the Standards Committee

Cllr Ian Brookfield (Chair)
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Tersaim Singh
Cllr Mary Bateman

Employees

Kevin O'Keefe	Director of Governance
Martyn Sargeant	Group Manager - Corporate Administration

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Andrew Wynne and from Cllr Linda Leach, for whom Cllr Mary Bateman substituted.
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest.
- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting**
Resolved:
 To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 24 March 2016.
- 4 **Matters arising**
There were no matters arising.
- 5 **Exclusion of press and public**
Resolved:
 That, in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act relating to any individual.
- 6 **Investigation of a Councillor**
Cllr Brookfield asked Kevin O'Keefe, Director of Governance, to provide an overview of the investigation report. He noted that the intention had been for the report to be tabled at the meeting.

Kevin O'Keefe explained that the Monitoring Officer receives and considers complaints about any potential breach in the Councillor code of conduct. He advised

that, when it appears possible that a breach may have occurred, it is initially the Monitoring Officer's responsibility to investigate the substantive allegations.

Kevin O'Keefe explained that he had received an anonymous complaint about Cllr Banger and the discharge of his duties as a Councillor. A copy of the complaint had also been received by the Managing Director and local MPs. He advised that, having conducted an initial review of the allegations, he had appointed one of the Council's investigators, who has a CID background, to investigate the matters raised.

Kevin O'Keefe noted that there had been no evidence to support the original allegation, that Cllr Banger was not resident at his declared address. However, he advised that the investigation had yielded evidence that material omissions had been made from Cllr Banger's register of interests, compounded by a failure to declare those interests at the Licensing Committee of which Cllr Banger was a member, moreover that, despite the issue being highlighted during the investigation, the omission had not been rectified.

Kevin O'Keefe explained that the role of the Standards Committee at its meeting was to determine whether Cllr Banger's conduct might amount to a breach of the Councillors' code of conduct. He emphasised that the Committee did not need to agree whether a breach had occurred, that decision to be made at a future meeting of the Standards Committee, which would consider the allegations in detail (if that were the agreed pathway).

Resolved:

That the Standards Committee should meet to consider whether Cllr Banger had breached the code of conduct.