

STANDARDS AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
13 DECEMBER 2016

(7.15 pm - 8.20 pm)

PRESENT Councillor Peter McCabe (in the Chair),
Councillors Janice Howard, Agatha Akyigyina, Michael Bull,
Adam Bush, John Dehaney, Mary-Jane Jeanes, Oonagh
Moulton, Ian Munn, Gregory Udeh and Martin Whelton

ALSO Paul Evans, Monitoring Officer
PRESENT: Derek Prior, Independent Person
Pam Donovan, Independent Person

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies were received from Councillors David Williams and Stephen Crowe.
Councillors Michael Bull and Oonagh Moulton were present as substitutes.

Apologies for lateness were given for Councillor Gregory Udeh, who arrived during
the Monitoring Officer's introduction to his report.

2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

3 MEMBER COMPLAINTS (Agenda Item 3)

The Monitoring Officer, Paul Evans, gave a detailed introduction to his report.

The Monitoring Officer noted that the complaint made by Councillor Jeff Hanna was
not included in the published agenda, and was subsequently issued in a
supplementary agenda. He also advised that Sally Burns had asked that members
be made aware that her complaint (shown on page 29 of the agenda) was submitted
in her capacity as Chair of the Carers Partnership Group.

The Monitoring Officer drew Committee Members' attention to the letter from the
Leader of the Council, which had been circulated by email and tabled at the meeting.
He confirmed that £1380 had been paid to LB Merton in respect of costs relating to
the use of the reply paid address.

At the invitation of the Chair, Derek Prior, the Independent Person, addressed the
Committee.

The Monitoring Officer reminded the Committee that their duty was to consider
whether a potential breach of the code of conduct had arisen, and if it was in the
public interest for an independent investigation to take place. He advised that the
Committee should not discuss nor attempt to investigate either the complaint itself, or
issues relating to the complaint, such as levels of council tax or the outcome of the
consultation.

Members of the Committee raised a series of questions, to which the Monitoring Officer responded.

The Committee then debated the recommendation contained within the report.

A vote was taken on the recommendation. Seven members voted for the recommendation and five voted against.

RESOLVED: That, having considered complaints made against the Leader of the Council, the Standards and General Purposes agrees the recommendation of the Monitoring Officer and Independent Person that the complaints made merit formal investigation.

Councillor Mary-Jane Jeanes asked that her vote (in favour of the recommendation) be recorded in the minutes.