

SWT Standards Committee

Thursday, 23rd February, 2023,
6.15 pm

The John Meikle Room - The Deane
House



Somerset West
and Taunton

Members: Lee Baker, Hugh Davies, Richard Lees, Mark Lithgow (Chair),
Martin Peters, Steven Pugsley, Hazel Prior-Sankey,
Terry Venner and Ray Tully

Agenda

1. **Appointment of Vice-chair**

2. **Apologies**

To receive any apologies for absence

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting of the Standards Committee**

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting of the Standards Committee held on 26 July 2022

4. **Declarations of interest**

To receive and note any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or prejudicial or personal interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The personal interests of councillors and clerks of Somerset County Council, town and parish councils and other local authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes).

5. **Public participation**

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue.

(Pages 5 - 10)

We are now live webcasting most of our committee meetings and you are welcome to view and listen to the discussion. The link to each webcast will be available on the meeting webpage, but you can also access them on the [Somerset West and Taunton webcasting website](#).

- 6. Standards Committee Action/Recommendation tracker** (Pages 11 - 12)

To receive an update on the status and progress of actions and recommendations arising from the Standards Committee meeting held on 26 July 2022.
- 7. Committee on Standards in Public Life Leading in practice report** (Pages 13 - 104)

The purpose of this report is for Members to consider and note the Leading in Practice Report: A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life published in January 2023.
- 8. Ethical awareness training update** (Pages 105 - 108)

The report gives Members an update on the ethical awareness training that has been carried out since the last Standards Committee meeting in July 2022.
- 9. Update on Standards arrangements for the new Unitary Council** (Pages 109 - 112)

This report provides Members with an update on the proposed Standards Regime in the new Unitary Council from 1 April 2023.
- 10. Standards Committee Chair's Annual Report 2022/23 - For Information Only** (Pages 113 - 116)

This report provides an update from the Chair of the Standards Committee, Councillor Mark Lithgow, on the work of the Standards Committee for the year 2022/23.
- 11. Access to information - Exclusion of the Press and Public**

During discussion of the following item (Agenda item 12) it might be necessary to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 13 13.02(e) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the Constitution.

This decision may be required because consideration of this

matter in public may disclose information falling within one of the descriptions of exempt information in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Committee will need to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Recommend that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the next item of business (Agenda Item 12) on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to an individual and that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

12. Monitoring Officer Update

To receive a presentation from the Monitoring Officer giving a summary of the 2022/23 year including information on the gifts and hospitality register, Register of Interests and complaints.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Pritchard', with a horizontal line underneath.

**ANDREW PRITCHARD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Please note that this meeting will be recorded. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded and webcast. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy. Therefore unless you are advised otherwise, by entering the Council Chamber and speaking during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact the officer as detailed above.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions. There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions. Speaking under "Public Question Time" is limited to 3 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chair will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate. Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, if a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chair will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors begin to debate the item.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group. These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room. Full Council, Executive, and Committee agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

The meeting room, including the Council Chamber at The Deane House are on the first floor and are fully accessible. Lift access to The John Meikle Room, is available from the main ground floor entrance at The Deane House. The Council Chamber at West Somerset House is on the ground floor and is fully accessible via a public entrance door. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are available across both locations. An induction loop operates at both The Deane House and West Somerset House to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. For further information about the meeting, please contact the Governance and Democracy Team via email: governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

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