MINUTES of
JOINT STANDARDS COMMITTEE
24 NOVEMBER 2026

PRESENT

Chairperson	Councillor P L Spenceley
Vice-Chairperson	Councillor A M Lay
Councillors	S J N Morgan, J C Stilts and M E Thompson
Independent Person	Mr J Mitchell

1. CHAIRPERSON'S NOTICES

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting and went through some general housekeeping arrangements for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M G Bassenger, V J Bell, M J Hall and S C Stratton.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Chairperson reminded Members that only those who had been present at the last meeting could agree the Minutes.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 April 2026 be approved and confirmed.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

There were none.

5. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it

involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

7. OUTSTANDING CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINT

The Committee considered the report of the Monitoring Officer seeking Members' consideration of how to progress an outstanding complaint made against a Councillor.

Members were reminded that the Committee at its meeting on 28 April 2026 had considered a report from the Monitoring Officer (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) and resolved "that the outstanding complaint made against a Councillor (as set out in the report) be placed on hold for a further six months (until October 2026) and further information from the Councillor be requested by the Monitoring Officer". Since that meeting, further information had been requested and Appendix 2 detailed the information received.

Appendix 1 to the report provided details of complaints received in March 2024 in relation to the behaviour of a Councillor, advised that an independent investigation had been carried out and noted that Appendix A to Appendix 1 set out the report arising from the investigation.

The Director of Legal and Governance introduced the report and provided the Committee with background information, including the options available for Members to consider.

In response to a question regarding Option C which would place the complaint on hold for a further six months and therefore until after the District Elections in May 2027, the Director explained that a shorter period could be selected.

Councillor S J N Morgan proposed that Option A to take no further action and close the complaint be agreed. This proposal was not seconded.

Councillor A M Lay referred to the effect the complaint may have had on other Members and Officers and, taking into consideration the Nolan Principles, proposed that Option B to refer the matter to the Joint Standards Committee for a formal decision be agreed. This proposal was duly seconded.

During the debate that followed, some Members of the Committee expressed their views regarding the complaint. In addition, Mr Mitchell, the Independent Person, provided the Committee with his views. Consideration was given to the complaint received, the person to whom the complaint related and the effect on other related parties. In response, the Director of Legal and Governance explained the options that could be considered should Members agree Option B.

The Chairperson then put the recommendation to agree Option B, as proposed by Councillor Lay, to the vote. Upon a vote being taken, this was duly agreed.

RESOLVED that the Councillor (as set out in the report) who was the subject of the complaint be given an opportunity to respond to the draft report and that the matter be referred to the Joint Standards Committee for a formal decision.

There being no other items of business the Chairperson closed the meeting at 8.00 pm.

P L SPENCELEY
CHAIRPERSON