



To be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 16th December, 2021

STANDARDS AND ADJUDICATION COMMITTEE – REFERRALS PANEL

25th November 2021 at 9.30 a.m.

Present:

Councillors Cairns, Patrick and K. Swinburn,

Officers in attendance:

- Eve Richardson-Smith (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
- Paul Windley (Democratic and Scrutiny Team Manager)
- Rachel Marshall (Executive Member Support Officer)

Also in attendance:

- Wayne Harvie (Independent Person)

SREF.17 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED – That Councillor K. Swinburn be appointed Chair for this meeting of the referrals panel.

COUNCILLOR K. SWINBURN IN THE CHAIR

SREF.18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received in respect of any item on the agenda for this meeting.

SREF.19 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that discussion of the following business was likely to disclose exempt information within paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

SREF.20 COMPLAINT MO/09/2021

The panel considered the above complaint in accordance with the local standards arrangements arising from the Localism Act 2011 and as adopted by this Council on the 29th June 2012.

The panel were given the opportunity to ask the Deputy Monitoring Officer any questions regarding the complaint and the Independent Person's views.

The panel concurred with the view of the Deputy Monitoring Officer and Independent Person, agreeing that the complaint failed to meet the stage 1 criteria, therefore could not be investigated as a breach of the Member's Code of Conduct and no further action can be taken.

However, the panel was concerned about the public perception of such use of social media forums and requested that the Monitoring Officer provide advice and guidance to the councillor concerned regarding the use of social media. Furthermore, the panel requested that the council's political group whips be advised to ask their members to ensure that when social media forums were set up that there was appropriate transparency over whether they were being administered by a councillor or known candidate.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That no further action be taken in respect of complaint MO/09/2021 as it did not meet the stage 1 assessment criteria.
- (2) That the Monitoring Officer be instructed to liaise with the Councillor concerned, giving advice and guidance on the use of social media.
- (3) That the Monitoring Officer be instructed to liaise with the council's political group whips to ensure that, in the interest of public reassurance, when social media forums are set up that there is appropriate transparency over whether they are being administered by a councillor or known candidate.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.49 a.m.