

Minutes of the meeting of the **STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Wednesday, 11 January 2017 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor B W Butcher

Councillors: M R Eddy
P J Hawkins (Minute No 34 only)
S C Manion

Also Present: Mr B P S Dowley (Independent Person)

Officers: Director of Governance
Corporate Complaints and Resilience Officer
Democratic Support Officer

30 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S M Le Chevalier and K Mills.

31 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that there were no substitute members appointed.

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

33 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 July 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

34 COMPLAINTS REPORT

The Committee received the report of the Corporate Complaints and Resilience Officer (CCRO) on formal complaints received by the Council for the period 1 July to 31 December 2016. 8 complaints had been investigated at stage two of the Council's complaints procedure and one upheld. The upheld case had involved the failure by the Council's contractor to collect waste from an event in Sandwich. There had been one complaint investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) which had not been upheld.

Referring to Appendix A, Members were advised that, of the 10 complaints received for Castle ward, 3 had been made by the same person. In response to Councillor M R Eddy, the CCRO explained that the complaints referred to as unknown in Appendix A were those where it was not known where the complainant lived and the complaint had not related to a particular property or site. The figure given covered all complaints received by the Council and not just those investigated by the CCRO. Councillor Eddy noted that the number of complaints for St Radigund's had doubled. The CCRO undertook to investigate this and report back to Members. In respect of Appendix C, of the 13 complaints relating to Council Tax Recovery, only one had been upheld.

Referring to Appendix E, the CCRO advised Members that Dover had had 14 complaints referred to the LGO in 2015/16, with one upheld. By way of comparison, Ashford Borough Council had had 23 complaints referred to the LGO (two upheld), Canterbury 28 complaints (two upheld), Shepway 21 complaints (none upheld) and Thanet 41 complaints (one upheld). Councillor Eddy commented that it was interesting to compare the number of Planning complaints received by Canterbury City Council (11) with those received by Dover (3). Councillor P J Hawkins complimented the service offered by Council Officers whom she had always found acted quickly to resolve problems and to be exceptionally helpful.

RESOLVED: (a) That the Corporate Complaints and Resilience Officer be requested to investigate the doubling of complaints relating to St Radigund's ward.

(b) That the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 10.17 am.