



# Rutland County Council

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Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP

Telephone 01572 722577 Facsimile 01572 758307 DX 28340 Oakham

Minutes of a meeting of the **CONDUCT COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham at 7.00 pm on **Tuesday 30 October 2012**.

PRESENT:	Mr M E Baines	Rutland County Council (Chairman)
	Mr R J Gale	Rutland County Council
	Mr T C King	Rutland County Council
	Mr C A Parsons	Rutland County Council
	Mr I Shatford	Independent Person
	Miss G Waller	Rutland County Council
Officers present:	Mr I Baugh	Democratic Services Officer
	Mr G Pook	Monitoring Officer
Apologies:	Mr M D A Pocock	Rutland County Council

## 445 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

For the purposes of probity, Mr Baines declared that he knew, and currently served on a local group with, the subject member of the complaint at agenda item 6.

## 446 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No petitions, deputations or questions had been received in relation to items listed on the agenda for this meeting.

## 447 TERMS OF REFERENCE

### RESOLVED

That the Terms of Reference of the Conduct Committee as agreed by the Council on 11 June 2012, be noted.

## 448 UPDATE ON CONDUCT MATTERS

The Monitoring Officer, Mr Pook, noted that the debate at a national level concerning the wording of the Localism Act 2011 and the regulations made under it had diminished. The Committee on Standards in Public Life had criticised the adequacy of the sanctions available under the new arrangements, but welcomed the objective of returning to a locally operated standards regime and recognised the importance of limiting the number of vexatious complaints. It intended to monitor the progress of the arrangements.

The new Code of Conduct had been approved by Council on 11 June 2012 to come into effect on 1 July. A report was submitted to Council on 10 September suggesting some revisions. Decisions on the revisions were delegated by Council to the Constitution Review Working Group. The main proposed changes were:

1. The inclusion of a class of interest to cover matters affecting family and friends;
2. Clarifying that Members were required to refresh their registers of interests.

It was noted that Parish Councils were adopting their own Codes of Conduct; most were using the version provided by the National Association of Local Councils.

The Conduct Committee was still lacking Parish representatives. Parishes had been asked to nominate members, but no names had been put forward. There was some discussion regarding the representation of Oakham and Uppingham Councils, given that one of the two places was intended to be taken by one of them. It was suggested that a representative of Uppingham Town Council be asked to sit on the Conduct Committee as Oakham had been represented on the former Standards Committee. If Oakham nominated an alternate member, that would provide cover in the event of a complaint involving a member of Uppingham.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) That the Monitoring Officer write to Parish and Town Councils requesting nominations for representatives to sit on the Conduct Committee.
- (2) That the Monitoring Officer remind Members of the need to update their Register of Interests.

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**EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED**

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and in accordance with the Access to Information provisions of Procedure Rule 239, as the following item of business was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

**449 EXTERNAL INVESTIGATION REPORT – COMPLAINT 13/11**

Report No. 215/2012 was received from the Monitoring Officer. The complaint had been raised under the old Standards regime but fell to be considered by the Conduct Committee under transitional arrangements.

**RESOLVED**

That the Investigating Officer's finding that there had been no breach of the relevant council's Code of Conduct by the subject member be agreed.

**450 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

No items of urgent business had been notified to the Chairman.

**451 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

29 January 2013 at 7.00pm in the Council Chamber

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The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.42pm

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