

Central Bedfordshire  
Council  
Priory House  
Monks Walk  
Chicksands,  
Shefford SG17 5TQ

**This meeting  
may be filmed.\***



**Central  
Bedfordshire**

**please ask for** Leslie Manning  
**direct line** 0300 300 5132  
**date** 19 September 2014

## **NOTICE OF MEETING**

### **STANDARDS SUB COMMITTEE (HEARING)**

Date & Time

**Monday, 29 September 2014 10.30 a.m.**

Venue at

**The Conference Room, Beadlow Manor Country Club,  
Amphill Road, Beadlow**

Richard Carr  
**Chief Executive**

To: The Members of the STANDARDS SUB COMMITTEE:

Cllrs D Bowater, D Jones, Mrs J G Lawrence, K C Matthews and A Shadbolt

All other Members of the Council - on request

***MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS  
MEETING***

**CONTAINS  
EXEMPT INFORMATION**

**\*Please note that phones and other equipment may be used to film, audio record, tweet or blog from this meeting. No part of the meeting room is exempt from public filming.**

**The use of arising images or recordings is not under the Council's control.**

# AGENDA

1. **Election of Chairman**

To elect a Chairman for the meeting.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence.

3. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members any declarations of interest.

4. **Welcome, Introductions and Other Matters**

The Chairman to welcome all attendees, ask all Members, officers and others formally involved in the Standards Sub-Committee hearing to introduce themselves, advise the hearing of any relevant matters relating to the venue's facilities and deal with any administrative matters.

5. **Procedure for the Hearing of Referrals from the Monitoring Officer**

The Chairman to explain that, to ensure a fair and consistent approach is adopted at the hearing, which follows the principles of natural justice, the Sub-Committee will follow the procedure set out in the attached written document. The finding of facts and alleged failure to follow the Code of Conduct will be dealt with together.

6. **Preliminary Procedural Issues**

To resolve those issues of disagreement, if any, about how the hearing should continue, which have not been resolved during the pre-hearing process.

7. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

To consider whether to pass a resolution under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the Press and Public from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that the consideration of the item is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

<b>Exempt Documents</b>
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<b>Item</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Exempt Para.</b>	<b>Page Nos.</b>
8.	<b>Consideration of Exempt Documents</b>	* 1, 2	13 - 124
	To consider exempt documents.		
9.	<b>Consideration of a Complaint Made Against a Northill Parish Councillor</b>		
	To consider the referral from the Monitoring Officer in connection with a complaint made against a Northill Parish Councillor in accordance with the 'Hearing Procedure for the General Purposes Standards Sub-Committee'.		
10.	<b>Recommendations to the Parish Council</b>		
	The Standards Sub-Committee will consider any verbal or written representations from the Investigating Officer before deciding whether or not it should make any recommendations to the Parish Council with a view to promoting high standards of conduct amongst Members.		
11.	<b>Decision</b>		
	To note that:		
	a)	the Standards Sub-Committee will announce its decision on the day the hearing concludes;	
	b)	the Sub-Committee will provide a short written decision on the day that the hearing concludes and provide a full written decision within two weeks of that date;	
	c)	the decision will be circulated to all relevant persons	
	d)	the right of appeal to Central Bedfordshire Council must be exercised within 21 days of the full written decision being issued.	

**HEARING PROCEDURE FOR  
THE GENERAL PURPOSES STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE  
in respect of referrals from the Monitoring Officer**

**Interpretation**

1. “Member” means the Member of the Authority, which includes, Central Bedfordshire Council, Town and Parish Councils and Co-opted Members, who is the subject of the allegation being considered by the Standards Sub-Committee, unless stated otherwise. It also includes the Member’s nominated representative.
2. “Investigator” means the Investigating Officer nominated by the Monitoring Officer to carry out the investigation.
3. “Sub-Committee” refers to the General Purposes Standards Sub-Committee.
4. “Legal Advisor” means the officer responsible for providing legal advice to the Sub-Committee. This may be the Monitoring Officer, another legally qualified officer of the Authority or someone appointed for this purpose outside the Authority.

**Representation**

5. The Member may be represented or accompanied during the meeting by a Solicitor, Counsel or with the permission of the Sub-Committee, another person.

**Legal Advice**

6. The Sub-Committee may take legal advice from its legal advisor at any time during the hearing or while they are considering the outcome. The substance of any legal advice given, to the Sub-Committee would be shared in the public domain with the Member and the Investigator if they are attending the hearing.

**Setting the Scene**

7. The Chairman will formally introduce all Members of the Sub-Committee and everyone who is formally involved in the Sub-Committee. The Chairman will then explain that the Sub-Committee is following a set procedure to ensure a fair and consistent approach is adopted which follows the principles of natural justice.

**Preliminary Procedure Issues**

8. The Sub-Committee should then resolve any issues of disagreement about how the hearing should continue, which has not been resolved during the pre-hearing process.

**Making finding of facts**

9. After dealing with any preliminary issues, the Sub-Committee should then move on to consider whether or not there are any significant disagreements about the facts contained in the Investigator’s report.

10. If there are no disagreements about the facts, the Sub-Committee can move on to the next stage of the hearing at 18.
11. If there is a disagreement, the Investigator, if present should be invited to make any necessary representations to support the relevant findings of facts in the report. With the Sub-Committee's permission, the Investigator may call any necessary supporting witnesses to give evidence. The Sub-Committee may give the Member an opportunity to challenge any evidence put forward by any witness called by the Investigator.
12. The Member should then have the opportunity to make representations to support his or her version of the facts and, with the Sub-Committee's permission, to call any necessary witnesses to give evidence.
13. At any time, the Sub-Committee may question any of the people involved or any of the witnesses, and may allow the Investigator to challenge any evidence put forward by witnesses called by the Member.
14. If the Member disagrees with most of the facts, it may make sense for the Investigator to start by making representations on all the relevant facts, instead of discussing each fact individually.
15. If a Member disagrees with any relevant fact in the Investigator's report, without having given prior notice of the disagreement, he or she must give good reasons for not mentioning it before the hearing. If the Investigator is not present, the Sub-Committee will consider whether or not it would be in the public interest to continue in his or her absence. After considering the Member's explanation for not raising the issue at an earlier stage, the Sub-Committee may then:-
  - (a) continue with the hearing, relying on the information in the Investigator's report;
  - (b) allow the Member to make representations about the issue, and invite the Investigator to respond and call any witnesses, as necessary; or
  - (c) postpone the hearing to arrange for appropriate witnesses to be present, or the Investigator to be present if he or she is not already.
16. The Sub-Committee will usually request all persons leave the room while they consider the representations and evidence in private.
17. On their return, the Chairman will announce the Sub-Committee's finding of the fact.

**Did the Member fail to follow the code**

18. The Sub-Committee then needs to consider whether or not based on the fact(s) it has found, the Member has failed to follow the Code of Conduct.
19. The Member should be invited to give relevant reasons why the Sub-Committee should not decide that he or she has failed to follow the Code.
20. The Sub-Committee should then consider any verbal or written representations from the Investigator.

21. The Sub-Committee may, at any time, question any one involved on any point they raise in their representations.
22. The Member should be invited to make any final relevant points.
23. The Sub-Committee will usually request all persons leave the room while they consider the representations.
24. On their return, the Chairman will announce the Sub-Committee's decision as to whether or not the Member has failed to follow the Code of Conduct.

**If the Member has not failed to follow the Code of Conduct**

25. If the Sub-Committee decides that the Member has not failed to follow the Code of Conduct, the Sub-Committee can move on to consider whether it should make any recommendations to the Authority.

**If the Member has failed to follow the Code of Conduct**

26. If the Sub-Committee decides that the Member has failed to follow the Code of Conduct, it will consider any verbal or written representations from the Investigator and the Member as to:-
  - (a) whether the Committee should set a sanction; or
  - (b) what form the sanction should take.
27. The Sub-Committee may question the Investigator and Member, and take legal advice, to make sure they have the information they need in order to make an informed decision.
28. The Sub-Committee will request that all persons leave the room while they consider whether or not to impose a sanction on the Member and, if so, what the sanction should be.
29. On their return the Chairman will announce the Sub-Committee's decision.

**Recommendations to the Authority**

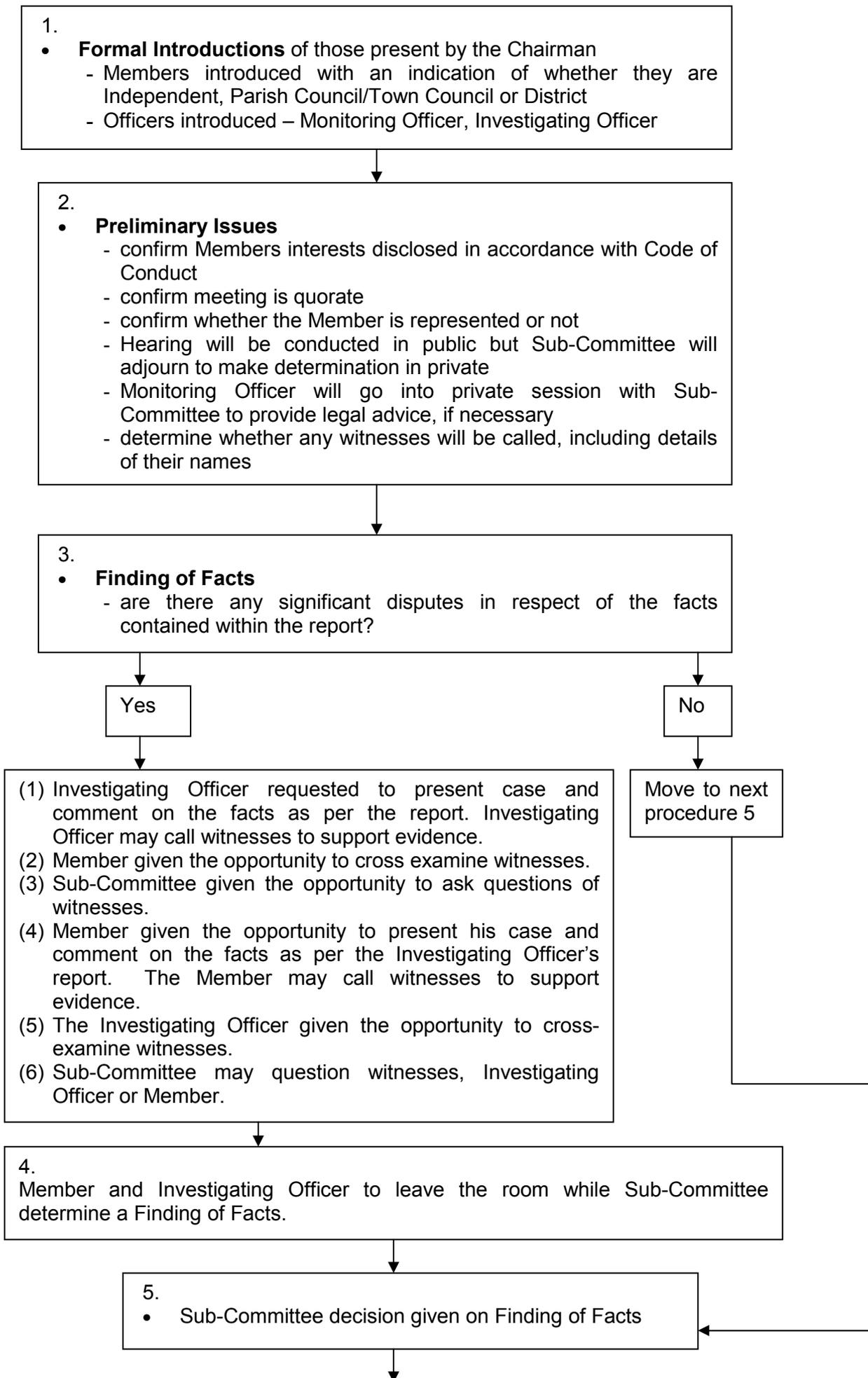
30. After considering any verbal or written representations from the Investigator, the Sub-Committee will consider whether or not it should make any recommendations to the Authority, with a view to promoting high standards of conduct amongst members.

**The written decision**

31. The Sub-Committee will announce its decision on the day and provide a short written decision on that day. It will also need to issue a full written decision within 2 weeks.
32. The decision will be circulated to all relevant persons.
33. Any appeal must be made to the Monitoring Officer of Central Bedfordshire Council within 21 days of the full written decision

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**FLOW CHART  
STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE HEARING PROCEDURE**



6.

- **Did Member fail to follow Code of Conduct?**
  - Member to make submissions
  - Investigating Officer to make any submissions
  - Sub-Committee may request further information

7.

Member and Investigating Officer leave the room

8.

Sub-Committee give their decision in respect of:-

- (1) No breach of Code
- (2) Breach of the Code but no action
- (3) Breach of the Code and sanctions will be applied.

**9. If breached the Code then Sub-Committee consider applying sanctions**

- representation from Investigating Officer
- representation from Member

- **Decision given on whether failed to follow Code**

If no breach or breach but no action to be taken, matter concluded

10.

The Member and Investigating Officer leave the room.

11.

- **Decision on sanction given by the Sub-Committee and any recommendations to the Authority**

- Final written decision will be despatched within 2 weeks
- Right of appeal to Central Bedfordshire Council within 21 days of the full written decision

NB: Sanctions

- Censure
- Restrict access to resources
- Apologies, training, mediation, conciliation

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