

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held at Room 15, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford on Thursday, 27 October 2016

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs J G Lawrence (Chairman)
Cllr G Perham (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs L Birt
Mrs C F Chapman MBE
P Hollick
M R Jones

Cllrs K C Matthews
R D Wenham
A Zerny

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Mrs A L Dodwell
J G Jamieson
N Warren

Substitutes: Cllrs E Ghent
D J Lawrence

Officers in Attendance: Mr Q Baker – Assistant Director Legal and Monitoring Officer
Ms M Damigos – Corporate Lawyer
Mr B Dunleavy – Democratic Services Manager
Ms M Peaston – Committee Services Manager

GPC/16/20. **Report on the Arrangements for Ethical Standards**

The Committee received a report summarising the Council's ethical governance and arrangements since March 2016. The report included explanations relating to the following:

- the Council's Code of Conduct, including the sanctions available when a breach is found
- an update on the maintenance of the Register of Interests
- the maintenance of an appropriate number of Independent Persons
- a proposal to publish the outcomes of decisions following complaints against Council members
- training of Clerks to parish and town councils in respect of ethical matters.

Points and comments were made, as follows:

- the range of information included in published decisions following a complaint against a member of Central Bedfordshire Council could vary, depending on the circumstances, but would generally include the name

of the Council member and the person who made the complaint with brief details of the complaint and the decision.

- a recommendation should be made to Council to amend the Constitution to enable the Monitoring Officer to publish such decisions
- A reduction in the number of Independent Persons from seven to four was appropriate and the proposal to extend the appointment of four existing Independent Persons to September 2020 should be the subject of a recommendation from this Committee to Council.

RESOLVED:

- 1. to note how the Council has complied with its obligations in respect of ethical standards under the Localism Act for the eight months since March 2016;**
- 2. that the number of Independent Persons maintained on the Panel be reduced from seven to four.**

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- 1. that the outcome of reports relating to complaints made under the Councillor Code of Conduct be published, and that the Constitution be amended to enable the Monitoring Officer to publish such decisions;**
- 2. to extend the appointment of four Independent Persons to September 2020.**