

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Standards Committee

Date: Tuesday, 21st November, 2017

Place: Committee Room 6 - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor D Burzotta (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)
Councillors D Jarvis, M Butler, C Endersby, N Folkard*, I Gilbert,
D McGlone*, M Terry and J Ware-Lane,
Ms J Morgan and Ms J Tetley (Independent Persons – non-voting
observers)
*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 31.

In Attendance: Councillors B Ayling and M Flewitt
J K Williams and C Gamble

Start/End Time: 6.30 p.m. – 7.35 p.m.

488 Appointment of Vice-Chairman for the Meeting

Resolved:

That Councillor Jarvis be appointed Vice-Chairman for the meeting.

489 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Garston (Substitute: Councillor McGlone) and Waterworth (Substitute: Councillor Folkard) and from Councillor Parker (Leigh Town Council).

490 Declarations of Interest

All Members of the Committee and Councillor Flewitt declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item No. 4 (Requests for Dispensations) on the grounds that the applicants are known to them as political colleagues.

Councillor Ayling declared a disqualifying interest in Agenda Item No. 4 (Requests for Dispensations) on the ground that has applied for a dispensation (withdrew from the meeting following his representation to the Committee).

491 Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 28th February 2017

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 28th February 2017 be received, confirmed as a correct record and signed.

492 Requests for dispensations

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive regarding applications for dispensations under Section 30 of the Localism Act 2011 that had been submitted by eight Councillors.

The Committee noted that five Councillors had sought a dispensation in respect of the Opposition Business (Compulsory Licensing Scheme for Residential Landlords and Rent Controls on Private Sector Landlords) which had been considered by Council at its meeting on 19th October 2017 and Cabinet on 7th November 2017. Three Councillors had sought a wider dispensation to cover not only the subject matter of the Opposition Business, but any future landlord and tenant matters where they might otherwise be disqualified.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Ayling addressed the meeting to make his representation in support of his application.

On consideration of the report, the Committee had regard to the circumstances under which a dispensation could be granted as set out in the Localism Act. The Committee also took into account the guidance issued by the former Standards Board for England which was still pertinent in dealing with dispensation requests.

Having considered the various grounds for granting a dispensation, the Committee gave particular weight to ground C (that the authority considers the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area) on the basis of the need for Members to represent residents (including landlords). The Committee also recognised that the issues the subject of the Opposition Business were common to both the eight Members and a significant proportion of the population in the area.

Resolved:-

1. That dispensations are required by the applicants.
2. That the dispensations be granted to all eight Councillors (namely Councillors Ayling, Boyd, Evans, J Garston, Habermel, Hadley, Salter and Waterworth) to enable them to participate, speak and vote at all Council meetings where the two specific matters comprising the Opposition Business are being considered. In reaching its decision, the Committee recognised the need for Members to represent residents (including landlords) and that the issues were common to the eight Members and a significant proportion of the general public.
3. That the dispensations shall operate for a period of two years from the date of this meeting.

Chairman: _____