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| **MINUTES *Meeting date: Monday 12 December 2016*** | | | | | | |
| ***IN ATTENDANCE*** | |  | | | | |
| * Ian Gordon (Convener) * Kevin Dunion * Lindsey Gallanders * Matt Smith * Julie Ward | | * Lorna Johnston (Executive Director) * Elaine McLean (Business Manager) | | | |
| **ITEM** | **CONTENT** | | | | **ACTION** |
| **STANDING ITEMS** | | | | | |
|  | APOLOGIESMr Gordon was absent for items 1-3 inclusive. Mr Smith chaired the meeting for these items only. **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**  Mr Smith declared an interest in item 13a and took no part in the discussion. | | | |  |
|  | **DRAFT MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**  Members reviewed and, subject to one minor amendment, approved the Minute of the meeting held on 31 October 2016. | | | |  |
|  | **MATTERS ARISING**  Members noted that all matters arising were either complete or to be discussed under the main agenda. | | | |  |
| **STRATEGIC MATTERS** | | | | | |
| **4.** | **Local Government & Communities Committee**  Members discussed the evidence provided by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life to the Local Government & Communities Committee on 7 November 2016. Members noted the Commissioner had advised the Local Government & Communities Committee that the Standards Commission had collated a list of revisals it would like to see made to the Councillors’ Code of Conduct. | | | |  |
| **BUSINESS MATTERS** | | | | | |
| **5.** | **COMMUNICATIONS:**  **Succession Planning Update**  Members noted the SPCB had confirmed the recruitment exercise for two new members of the Standards Commission was progressing in accordance with their schedule and that interviews were due to be held that day. Members asked to be kept updated on the recruitment process noted and that succession planning would be included in the Matters Arising, as a standard item, until appointments for both roles had been made. Members further agreed that the SPCB should be asked to confirm whether or not they intended to make a press announcement about Mr Dunion’s appointment as the new Convener. | | | **Executive Team** | |
|  | **Update on Scottish Government’s proposed Consultation on Changes to the Councillors’ Code of Conduct**  Members noted that the Scottish Government had launched the consultation on 12 December 2016, with a closing date of 20 March 2016. Members agreed to discuss the consultation at the next meeting, on 30 January 2017, with a view to agreeing a response. This should include suggestions for the wording of the proposed extensions to the exclusions in the Councillors’ Code of Conduct that were the subject of the consultation. Members further agreed that a special bulletin should be issued to Monitoring Officers to advise them of the consultation and to seek views on the Standards Commission’s list of other suggested revisals to the Code. The list should then be sent to the Scottish Government along with the Standards Commission’s agreed formal response to the consultation. | | | **Executive Team** | |
| **Potential New Schedule 3 Bodies**  Members noted that the Scottish Government had advised that four new public bodies had been established and were due to commence work on 1 April 2017. The intention was to list all four under Schedule 3 of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000, which would bring their Members within the remit of the Standards Commission. Members asked the Executive Team to contact the new bodies if and when they were listed to offer assistance with training or inducting their members on the ethical standards framework. | | | **Executive Team** | |
| **COSLA**  Members noted that the Executive Director was due to meet the new Chief Executive of COSLA on 21 December 2016. | | |  | |
| **6.** | **Applications for Appointment of Standards Officers for**  **Health & Social Care Integration Joint Boards**  Members reviewed and approved the following appointment for the role of Standards Officer:   * Ralph Riddiough, South Ayrshire Health & Social Care IJB   Members agreed the Executive Team should provide confirmation of the appointment to the Chief Officer. | | | **Executive Team** | |
| **7.** | **Illustrations of Compliance with Councillors’ Code of Conduct**  Members noted that the Improvement Service had indicated they had received some requests for case studies or examples, which demonstrated good practice in interpreting the Councillors’ Code of Conduct. Members agreed that Executive Team should draft some straightforward case examples for approval at the next meeting so that they could then be sent to the Improvement Service and published on the Standards Commission’s website. | | | **Executive Team** | |
| **8.** | **Members Hearing Packs**  Members considered the recommendation made by the Executive Team and agreed that they only required to be sent the productions for each case and not any standard correspondence. Members asked that they be sent confirmation of the venue and Hearing arrangements at least one week before each Hearing. Members agreed to either shred correspondence and documents immediately after written Hearing decisions had been finalised or to bring them into the office for destruction at the following meeting of the Standards Commission. | | | **Executive Team**  **Members** | |
| **9.** | **Programme for Standards Officers’ Workshop on 28 March 2017**  Members reviewed and, subject to some revisals, approved the draft programme for the Standards Officers’ Workshop, due to be held on 28 March 2017. Members agreed this should be issued to Standards Officers along with a formal invite to the event. Members further agreed that representatives from the CESPLS and the Scottish Government should also be invited to attend. | | | **Executive Team** | |
| **10.** | **Risk Management Policy**  Members agreed changes to be made to the Risk Management Policy in order to ensure if remained relevant, fit for purpose and reflected existing governance arrangements. Members asked the Executive Team to revise the policy accordingly.  Members noted a new risk had been added to the Risk Register 2016/17 in respect of ownership of the Standards Commission’s website domain. Members agreed this matter should be retained on the Risk Register until the issue had been resolved and ownership of the domain had been transferred to the Standards Commission. | | | **Executive Team** | |
| **11.** | **December 2016 Professional Briefing**  Subject to some minor amendments, Members agreed the content of the professional briefing. Members asked the Executive Team to publish the professional briefing on the website and to issue it to Monitoring and Governance Officers and Elected Members. | | | **Executive Team** | |
| **CASES UPDATE** | | | | | |
| **12.** | **NOTES OF DECISION/CASES NOT PURSUED & SECTION 14 NOTIFICATION LETTERS**  Members reviewed the seven cases published by the CESPLS on his website following completion of his investigation. | |  | | |
| **13.** | **BREACH REPORTS**   1. **NB/SFRS/1919:** Mr Neil Pirie formerly of the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service. Members agreed to hold a Hearing. | | **Executive Team** | | |
| **14.** | **HEARING UPDATE / POST HEARING ACTIVITIES**   1. **LA/AB/1758:** Councillor Thomas Rainey of West Dunbartonshire Council. Members noted the Hearing took place on 22 November 2016. The Hearing Panel determined there had been a breach of the Councillors’ Code of Conduct and censured the Respondent.   **b) LA/WL/1882 & NHS/Lo/1872:** Councillor Frank Toner of West Lothian Council and formerly of NHS Lothian. Members noted the conjoined Hearing took place on 24 November 2016. The Hearing Panel determined there had been a breach of both the Councillors’ Code of Conduct and the Code of Conduct for Members of NHS Lothian. The Hearing Panel censured the Respondent.  **c) LA/AC/1876:** Councillor William Cormie of Aberdeen City Council. Members noted the Hearing was scheduled to take place on 24 and 25 January 2017. A pre-Hearing meeting was due to be held on 15 December 2016. | |  | | |
| **AOB** | | | | | |
| **15.** | **2016/17 & 2017/18 DIARY DATES/MEETINGS**  Members reviewed the schedule and planned activities. Members agreed to move the May 2017 meeting from 30 to 31 May 2017.  **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**  The Standards Commission will meet on Monday, 30 January 2017.  **CHANGE OF CONVENER**  Members noted that Mr Gordon’s tenure as Convener was due to end on 31 January 2017 and that this was his last meeting. Members formally congratulated Mr Dunion on his appointment as the new Convener and thanked Mr Gordon for his leadership and all his hard work, commitment and support during his time in office. | |  | | |