

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCILLOR CONDUCT COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2018**

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT Ergin Erbil, Glynis Vince, Christine Hamilton and Michael Rye
OBE
Sarah Jewell (Independent Person)

ABSENT Elaine Hayward, Christine Chamberlain (Independent Person)

OFFICERS: Jeremy Chambers (Director of Law and Governance)
Penelope Williams (Secretary)

Also Attending: None.

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WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hayward and Christine Chamberlain, Independent Person.

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SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Rye attended the meeting as a substitute for Councillor Hayward.

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DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

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INDEPENDENT PERSON - EXTENSION OF TERM OF OFFICE

Sarah Jewell left the meeting whilst this item was being discussed.

The Committee received a report from Jeremy Chambers (Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer) on the extension of appointment of Sarah Jewell, Independent Person. (Report No: 85)

NOTED

1. It was a statutory requirement that the Council appoints at least one independent person. Enfield has two.
2. It was important to ensure continuity. Sarah Jewell was extremely competent and highly recommended by the Monitoring Officer.

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3. Independent Persons were paid an allowance of £500. Similar allowances were paid to the independent member of the Audit and Risk Management Committee and the adoption and fostering panels.

AGREED to recommend to full Council that Sarah Jewell's term of office be extended by 2 years to 8 October 2020.

Sarah Jewell returned to the meeting and the Chair thanked her for her work.

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UPDATE ON COMPLAINTS

The Committee received a copy of the rolling record of complaints currently being considered by the Monitoring Officer.

Jeremy Chambers introduced the report saying it provided an indication of the current case load. Cases would not be discussed in detail as this could prejudice the outcome of any later hearing.

NOTED

1. The record gave a flavour of the type of cases being considered.
2. Case Ref: 011 was received in August 2018 and Case Ref: 014 after the Annual Council Meeting in May 2018.
3. Since publication of the agenda another complaint had been received, concerning Councillor Coleshill and relating to an incident that had occurred at the last Council Meeting (20 September 2018). Sarah Jewell (Independent Person) had been consulted and the Monitoring Officer had decided to employ an external investigator to look into the complaint. Both the Monitoring Officer and the Head of Legal had been witnesses at the meeting.

AGREED to note the information provided on current complaints.

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MEMBERS EXPENSES

The Committee received a report from Jeremy Chambers (Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer) outlining the expenses paid to members in pursuance of their duties, as well as providing some comparator information. (Report No: 86)

NOTED

1. Comparator details were included for those authorities that published information on their websites. Not all authorities do.
2. The view that information that the agreement not to increase members' allowances, by the rate of inflation each year since 2009, should have been included in the report. The allowances have been frozen since this date.

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3. It was felt that this agreement should now be reviewed.
4. The suggestion that any change should be linked to the outcomes of the forthcoming boundary commission review. The Council will know how many councillors the authority will be made up of in November this year.
5. The phone usage of most members falls well within the average. If usage of any individual is seen as a cause for concern, this is flagged with Jeremy Chambers as Monitoring Officer.
6. Members allowances will be reviewed by this committee, after the outcome of the boundary review are known in November, provided that this is the proper place for it to be discussed.
7. Members' allowances can be reviewed at any time. An independent review could be commissioned at any time.

AGREED to note the information provided on members' expenses.

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GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

The Committee received a report from Jeremy Chambers, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, detailing the gifts and hospitality offered to members. (Report No: 84)

NOTED

1. The £25 threshold for gifts and hospitality was very low, although the committee were happy to keep it at this level.
2. It was suggested that the low numbers of reports was due to under reporting.
3. Officers declared far more offers than members.

AGREED that the whips would remind each group of the need to record offers and receipt of any gift or hospitality over £25.

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MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2018 were received and agreed as a correct record.

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WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

The Committee noted the work programme for 2018/19.

AGREED that training for the committee and substitute committee members would be arranged before the next meeting on the 11 December 2018.

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

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The date of the next meeting, which would include training, was noted as follows:

- Tuesday 11 December 2018

The Chair thanked everyone for coming.