

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Policy and Resources Sub-Committee Meeting held on Friday 13th March 2020 at 12.00pm in the Parish Council Office, New Green Centre, Thurston.

In the Chair: Cllr Rainbow

Present: Cllrs. Haley and West. In Attendance: Mrs V Waples, Clerk.

1. The Chairman declared the meeting open at 12.00pm and confirmed that this meeting had been called to discuss a complaint submitted by a member of the public against the handling of information provided and consideration of the information contained within the complaint.
2. It was confirmed and approved by all present that the Policy and Resources Committee ratified the decision taken that, in accordance with the Council's complaints procedure, a sub-committee had been formed to consider this matter further in accordance with the Council's Complaints Procedure, aif.
3. TO HEAR THE COMPLAINT AGAINST THE COUNCIL WITH REFERENCE TO THE COUNCIL'S COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:

- a. The Clerk outlined the grounds for the complaint – confidential – reference was made to the communications received dated 4th March 2020 and 28th February 2020.
- b. Clerk to explain the Council's position – confidential – reference was made to the Council's own policies: complaints procedure; disciplinary procedure; disciplinary rules; electronic communication and social media policy.
- c. Council to consider whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made – it was agreed that the Chairman must be able to share confidential information if a complaint is being made and that in terms of a complaint there are no ground for it to remain with just one source. Agreed that the Chairman has not acted inappropriately, and that all actions taken by the Chair and his response were deemed to have been correct. No valid reason to uphold the complaint. If there is something between the persons involved that is a private matter between the individuals. Agreed that the Chair has acted in accordance with procedure and good manner.

Concerns were raised that the complaint was sent in the first instance to the Chair's work email address and false allegations were raised.

- d. Council to convey to the Clerk for onward submission to the complainant the Council's decision – it was agreed that the response should cover the consideration that in essence this was a private matter between the two individuals and all actions taken by the Council has been in accordance with procedure and were necessary for establishing the facts. At no time, in so far as the Parish Council were able to ascertain, was Parish time, material or equipment used.

Should postings on social media be of a trolling nature, or even bullying, intimidating, threatening and targeting named individuals then the Parish Council has been advised to recommend that such posts are reported to the Suffolk Constabulary who, under the Malicious Communications Act 1988, have the power to investigate the matter further.

As far as the PC is concerned it was agreed by all present that the matter is closed.

4. There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 12.15pm.

So approved, following amendment by the Chairman, at the meeting of 15th May 2020