

# MINUTES

*Meeting date: Monday 28 January 2019*

## IN ATTENDANCE

- Kevin Dunion (Convener)
- Lindsey Gallanders
- Michael McCormick
- Tricia Stewart
- Paul Walker
- Lorna Johnston (Executive Director)
- Elaine McLean (Business Manager)

ITEM	CONTENT	ACTION
<b>STANDING ITEMS</b>		
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES</b> There were no apologies.</p> <p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> No declarations of interest were made.</p>	
2.	<p><b>DRAFT MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING</b> Members reviewed and approved the minutes of the meeting on 17 December 2018.</p>	
3.	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING</b> Members noted that all matters arising were either complete or were due to be discussed under the main agenda.</p>	
<b>STRATEGIC MATTERS</b>		
4.	<p><b>OUTREACH AND PROMOTION WORK</b> The Convener advised that he and the Executive Director had met with a public relations company on 23 January 2019 and had agreed to instruct external support, on a project by project basis, to assist the Standards Commission in proactively communicating about any key messages on, and initiatives it was undertaking to support improvements to, the ethical standards framework and the Codes of Conduct. The Convener advised that it was intended that, initially, the company would assist the Standards Commission in drafting and issuing a news release and thereafter placing an opinion piece on the main points and messages arising from the responses to the Standards Commission's survey of Members of Devolved Public Bodies. Members agreed that the possibility of trying to obtain some radio coverage should also be explored with the company.</p>	<b>Executive Director</b>
5.	<p><b>DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2019/20</b> Subject to some amendments and additions, Members agreed the Business Plan for 2019 / 2020, in support of the final year of the Standards Commission's Strategic Plan 2016 to 2020. Members noted the Executive Team would prepare a draft Risk Register for consideration at the Standards Commission meeting on 25 February 2019. Once this was agreed, references to the Risk Register would be added and the Business Plan brought back for noting at the following meeting.</p>	
<b>BUSINESS MATTERS</b>		

6.	<p><b>COMMUNICATIONS:</b></p> <p><b>a) New Member Recruitment Update</b> Members noted that the interviews for Mrs Gallanders' replacement had been conducted by the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) on 21 January 2019. The SPCB had subsequently advised that they had chosen a successful candidate. Members asked the Executive Director to keep them updated on any further progress.</p> <p><b>b) Assisting Constituents Card</b> Members noted that a draft Assisting Constituents Card had been issued to all Monitoring Officers, the Improvement Service and elected members of South Lanarkshire Council. The feedback on the content and format received to date had been positive. Members agreed that the once all feedback had been obtained and collated, the Executive Team should finalise and issue the Card at the end of the following month.</p> <p><b>c) Survey of Members of Devolved Public Bodies</b> Members noted that the document outlining the further analysis of the survey results had now been finalised and approved. Members agreed that it should not be published, however, until advice had been sought from the public relations company about the best way to disseminate the main points and key messages arising from the responses received.</p> <p><b>d) Requests for Training from Individual Councils and Devolved Public Bodies</b> Members noted that a number of requests for the Standards Commission to provide training on the Codes of Conduct had been received from a number of individual Councils and Devolved Public Bodies. Following discussions with the Convener, the Executive Director had advised that the Standards Commission did not have the resources to support individual training events but intended to continue to run two regional training events a year for councillors and <i>ad hoc</i> sectoral training events for Members of Devolved Public Bodies</p> <p><b>e) Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland</b> Members noted that the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland had changed his branding and now referred to himself in the abbreviated form as the 'Ethical Standards Commissioner'. Members expressed the hope that this might result in there being less confusion between his role and that of the Standards Commission, and asked that the Executive Team use the new abbreviated title in any publicly available documents and correspondence.</p>	<p><b>Executive Director</b></p> <p><b>Executive Team</b></p>
7.	<p><b>QUARTER 3 BUSINESS PLAN 2018/19 REPORT</b> Members reviewed the report on progress made in quarter three against the 2018 / 2019 Business Plan. Members were pleased that no slippages of any significance, that were within the control of the Standards Commission, had been recorded in respect of previously identified activities.</p>	
8.	<p><b>QUARTER 3 BUDGET v EXPENDITURE REPORT</b> Members noted the Report, which detailed expenditure incurred to 31 December 2018 and projected expenditure against budget to the year end. Members noted that the Executive Team were confident that it was unlikely that there would be any other significant under or overspend against the overall budget.</p>	
9.	<p><b>AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE – UPDATE FROM MEETING 21 JANUARY 2019</b> Members noted the minutes and the verbal report provided by the Chair of the Audit &amp; Risk Committee, Mr McCormick, of the meeting on 21 January 2019. Members noted that the Internal Auditor had not yet undertaken his proposed review, as part of the 2017/18 internal audit, of the Standards Commission's preparedness for the implementation of the GDPR. Members noted that this was because the Internal</p>	





	<p><b>c) LA/An/2094:</b> Councillor Richard Moore of Angus Council. Members noted that Angus Council had confirmed in a letter of 17 January 2019 that it had noted the terms of the Standards Commission's decision in respect of the Hearing held on 19 November 2018.</p> <p><b>d) LA/As/2173:</b> Councillor Paul Johnston of Aberdeenshire Council. Members considered the report from the ESC and the terms of the Standards Commission's policy on making decisions under Section 16 of the 2000 Act and determined that it was proportionate and in the public interest to hold a Hearing.</p>	
<b>AOB</b>		
<p><b>14.</b></p>	<p><b>SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT'S JOINT WORKING GROUP ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT</b>  The Convener advised that he had arranged to meet the Parliament's Chief Executive on 18 February 2019 to discuss the recommendations contained in the Joint Working Group's report. Members agreed that, in particular, the Convener should draw the Parliament's attention to the fact that it was the Standards Commission and not the ESC who had the powers to require individuals to attend Hearings, give evidence and produce documents and also to administer oaths to witnesses. The Convener should also raise the potential difficulties involved in dealing with sexual harassment complaints in a different way to other complaints. The Convener advised that he would report on the discussions at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>MRS GALLANDERS</b>  Members noted that it was Mrs Gallanders' last meeting before her tenure as a Member of the Standards Commission came to an end. The Convener thanked Mrs Gallanders, on behalf of the other Members and staff, for her hard work and commitment to the organisation. In particular, the Convener noted that Mrs Gallanders collegiate approach and willingness to provide assistance had helped ensure that there had been a smooth transition when the Executive Director and new Members had been appointed. Members agreed that Mrs Gallanders had made a substantial contribution to the organisation and that it had made significant progress during her tenure. Members thanked Mrs Gallanders for her support and dedication.</p> <p><b>AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING</b>  Members agreed to advise the Executive Director of any items they wished included in the agenda for discuss at the next meeting.</p>	<p><b>CONVENER</b></p>
<p><b>15.</b></p>	<p><b>SUGGESTED 2019/2020 DIARY DATES – MEETING SCHEDULE</b>  Members noted the suggested dates for Standards Commission meetings in 2019/20 and confirmed they would advise the Executive Team if they wished to change any of these.</p> <p><b>2018 WORKPLAN</b>  Members noted the planned activities.</p> <p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>  Members noted that the next meeting of the Standards Commission was scheduled to take place on Monday, 25 February 2019.</p>	