

Minutes of a **MEETING** of the **POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE** held at the Four Clocks Centre, Bishop Auckland on **TUESDAY 19TH NOVEMBER 2013** at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Councillor Anderson (in the Chair) and Councillors Blackburn and Lethbridge

Also Present: David Anderson, (Town Clerk)

PS.12/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Golightly and L Zair.

PS.13/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted.

PS.14/13 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no members of the public in attendance.

PS.15/13 MODEL STANDING ORDERS

Consideration was given to the adoption of the model Standing Orders recently published by NALC which had been revised to reflect the impact of the Localism Act Changes.

Whilst local councils were not obliged to adopt the model Standing Orders, it was advised that they should do so to ensure that their Council's documentation was kept up to date and within current regulations.

It was suggested that the Town Clerk circulate a draft to the Members of the Policy & Strategy Committee for comments prior to submission to Council for consideration.

RECOMMENDED: That the Town Clerk circulate a draft to the Members of the Policy & Strategy Committee for comments prior to submission to Council for consideration.

PS.16/13 QUALITY COUNCILS SCHEME

Consideration was given to a briefing paper detailing final proposals for the revised Quality Councils Scheme.

The Quality Councils scheme aimed to raise the profile and credibility of town and parish councils within the communities they serve and with key local and national partners. The scheme had been designed to empower local councils to meet the challenges of the future by providing a framework to raise standards, benchmark good practice and celebrate excellence in key areas of good governance, community leadership and engagement, and improvement and development.

A major change to the former quality scheme was that Council's would apply for accreditation at one of 3 levels to be known as one, two or three star quality councils.

Members noted the proposals, but had reservations on the star ratings and questioned the merit of seeking a one star rating. It was noted that the paper had been issued by NALC for information only. There had been extensive consultation during the review process and there was no further opportunity to comment on the proposals.

RECOMMENDED: That the information be noted.