

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Renewal of Dispensation

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To consider renewing the dispensation granted to all members by the committee on 6 November 2015, subsequently renewed on 23 November 2016, concerning motions relating to British Steel (formerly TATA Steel).

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At its meeting on 6 November 2015, the committee granted a dispensation to enable all members of the council to participate in a motion concerning TATA Steel, now British Steel, at the meeting of full council on 10 November 2015.
- 2.2 This dispensation was extended for a further 12 months by the committee at their meeting on 23 November 2016 to enable all members to continue to discuss and debate issues relating to the steel industry.
- 2.3 In addition, dispensation was given to Cllr Evison at the committee's meeting on 13 July 2016 (minute 156 refers) to act as the council's Lead Member for Steel and Heavy Industry. Whilst Cllr Evison has now retired, he worked for many years for British Steel/TATA. Any renewal of the dispensation set out in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 would naturally apply to Cllr Evison as well as all other elected members. As such, the need for a specific dispensation is no longer required.
- 2.4 The terms of the dispensation granted by the committee in November 2015 and renewed by the committee in November 2016 were as follows:

“The committee, exceptionally, considered it appropriate that a dispensation be granted to all members of the council to participate in the debate and vote on this motion pursuant to section 33 (2) (c) of the Localism Act 2011 and any related motions or items that come before the council for consideration. This dispensation to apply for a period of twelve months unless rescinded earlier by the committee.”

Minute 116 and 170 of the committee refers.

- 2.5 The committee recognised that many members of the council were either past or present employees of the steel industry or had family members and friends who were, and as such the motion may give rise to declaration requirements under the council’s Code of Conduct. Notwithstanding, the committee, exceptionally, considered that all members should be free to participate in debates and contribute their knowledge and experience of the steel industry so as to ensure the fullest debate in the interests of the residents of North Lincolnshire.
- 2.6 The renewed dispensation is due to expire on 23 November 2017 and the purpose of this report is for the committee to consider whether it should be renewed again, in light of the continuing interest in British Steel, and the likelihood that the council will continue to receive reports and debate items on its progress.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 To further renew the dispensation granted by the committee on 6 November 2015 and renewed on 23 November 2016.
- 3.2 Not to renew the dispensation granted by the committee on 6 November 2015 and renewed on 23 November 2016.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 To renew the dispensation would remove any ambiguity over the position and ensure that members that may have interests remain unhindered by the declaration requirements from fully participating in any debates concerning British Steel.
- 4.2 Not to renew the dispensation may impede the ability of the council to fully debate matters concerning British Steel, contrary to the interests of the residents of North Lincolnshire.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 5.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

6.1 Not applicable.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

7.1 As of the date of this report no conflict of interests have been identified.

7.2 Both Independent Persons and the Group Secretaries of both political groups have been consulted on the contents of this report.

8. RECOMMENDATION

8.1 That pursuant to section 33 (2) (c) of the Localism Act 2011 the dispensation granted by the Committee on 6 November 2015, subsequently renewed on 23 November 2016, be renewed for a further twelve month period.

DIRECTOR: GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIPS

Civic Centre
Ashby Road
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN16 1AB
Author: Will Bell / Dean Gillon
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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:
Minute 116 of the Standards Committee of 6 November 2015.
Minute 156 of the Standards Committee of 13 July 2016.
Minute 170 of the Standards Committee of 23 November 2016.