

Standards Committee - Tuesday, 27 June 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held at Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on Tuesday, 27 June 2023 at 7.00 pm.

Present:	Councillors:	Khurana (Chair), Jackson and Craig
Also Present:	Independent Persons:	Luke Rigg
	Officers:	Marie Rosenthal, Interim Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer Sonal Mistry, Senior Lawyer (Governance)

Councillor Anjna Khurana in the Chair

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (ITEM NO. 1)

Apologies were received from Cllr Gill.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ITEM NO. 2)

None.

3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (ITEM NO. 3)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2023 be confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

4 STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE (ITEM NO. 4)

The Chair introduced the paper advising that the proposals arose from the Constitution review and relate to strengthening the role of the Standards Committee in future, in particular in relation to the committee having responsibility for determining requests for dispensations for members who have either a pecuniary or personal interest and to the committee receiving the Annual Report on Member Standards and Conduct.

In relation to dispensations, the circumstances under which the committee can grant a dispensation were reviewed and agreed.

The Chair introduced the second proposal; that the Standards Committee receives the Annual Report on Member Standards and Conduct in future, rather than the Audit and Risk Committee.

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The previous year's report, attached as Appendix 2 was considered. Luke Rigg, Independent Person, commented that the report struck a reasonable balance between confidentiality and transparency and the format was agreed for future years.

The revised Terms of Reference for Standards Committee, reflecting these changes was attached as Appendix 1.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 That the committee will receive the Annual Report on Member Standards and Conduct in future years was agreed.
- 2.2 That the committee accepts responsibility for determining future requests for dispensations to any member in respect of statutory and non-statutory disclosable interests was agreed.
- 2.3. The revised Committee Terms of Reference, attached as Appendix 1, were agreed.
- 2.4 The 2021/22 Annual Report on Member Standards and Conduct, attached as Appendix 2, was noted.

5 REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS (ITEM NO. 5)

The Chair introduced the report and a tabled amendment, published in a second despatch, which proposed changes to the Code of Conduct, to clarify the arrangements regarding personal interests. The proposed changes set out in Appendix A and the tabled amendment were reviewed.

The Interim Director of Law and Governance advised that the proposed changes relate to other registerable interests, including serving on a body as a result of a council appointment and involvement in charities and organisations on a personal level and suggest expanding the requirement to declare these interests if held by your spouse or partner.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 That the Code of Conduct for Members has been reviewed for compliance with the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 and best practice be noted.
- 2.2. That the changes to the Code of Conduct for Members as detailed in Appendix A and modified in the tabled amendment be recommend to Council for approval.

6 REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH STANDARDS ALLEGATIONS (ITEM NO. 6)

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The Chair introduced the report which seeks final agreement to the updated arrangements for dealing with Standards allegations, as set out in Appendix A.

The Senior Lawyer (Governance) outlined the review process. Cllr Jackson enquired who had been involved in the review. The Interim Director of Law and Governance advised that the review had looked at other procedures across London and that the Independent Persons had been consulted. The Interim Director of Law and Governance advised that, in her view, the new arrangements were a simplified and improved process. Luke Rigg, Independent Person, confirmed that his comments, which were made with reference to the LGA Guidance, had been reflected in the proposed arrangements.

RESOLVED:

2.1 That the revised Procedure set out in Appendix A be approved.

MEETING CLOSED AT 7.26 pm

Chair