



Report of: **Director of Law and Governance**

| Meeting of | Date | Ward(s) |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------|
| Audit Committee | 15 October 2018 | All |

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| Delete as appropriate | | Non-exempt |
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Subject: ANNUAL REPORT ON STANDARDS AND MEMBER CONDUCT

1. Synopsis

In accordance with the Audit Committee Terms of Reference, the Monitoring Officer is required to submit to the committee an annual report concerning standards of member conduct, including a summary of complaints received under the Code of Conduct Complaints Procedure and their outcome. The complaints received in the municipal year 2017-8 are detailed below. This report also includes information on member training and development and declarations of interest.

2. Recommendation

2.1 To note the contents of the report.

3. Details

3.1 Member Training and Development

3.2 A more strategic approach to ensuring that members make the most of opportunities for development was taken this year, including ensuring that there were opportunities for all councillors who wished to undertake training to do so and that the budget available was fairly allocated between the Executive and backbench members.

Councillors attended a number of conferences, including the Early Intervention Foundation Conference, the Youth Justice Convention, Priorities for UK Waste and Recycling and the LGA Annual Conference. One of the backbench Councillors completed the LGA Leadership course and further training has covered Licensing, Planning, Effective Scrutiny and Writing Effective Presentations and Speeches.

- 3.3 Information about free of charge and subsidised development opportunities, provided by London Councils and the Local Government Association, were regularly circulated to Members.
- 3.4 Members were also been provided with specific advice on governance issues from time to time, including advice regarding declarations of interest and information governance.
- 3.5 A comprehensive Member Induction and Development Programme, to start immediately after the election in May 2018, has been developed. The initial programme will run until December 2018. Members will receive a survey in October 2018 and their responses will help us assess the first 6 months and guide the on-going future development programme.
- 3.6 Financial Declarations**
- 3.7 All Members reviewed, confirmed and where necessary, updated their register of interests, including their financial declarations, in March 2018. The Members Register of Interests is available on the Council's website.
- 3.8 The Members interests, declarations of interest made at meetings, declarations regarding gifts and hospitality and the councillors' attendance record at committee meetings are all available on the Council's website.
- 3.9 Complaints**
- 3.10 All complaints under the Members Code of Conduct were referred to the Monitoring Officer (the Director of Law and Governance). Following consideration of the complaint, the Monitoring Officer decides whether it is appropriate to seek an informal resolution. Where there is no informal resolution, the Monitoring Officer may:
- decide not to investigate further;
 - decide that the matter requires investigation.
 - decide to refer the decision as to whether or not there is to be an investigation to the Standards Committee.
- 3.11 No formal complaints have been received against Members during 2017-18 relating to breaches of the Members Code of Conduct, although some issues have been raised which have not reached that stage, as follows:

| Members involved | Complainant | Topic | Formal complaint | Outcome |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|--|
| 1 | Member of the public | Determination by Licensing Committee | N | The complainant did not proceed with the complaint after the initial response and request for further information. |

| | | | | |
|---|----------------------|--|---|--|
| 1 | Member of the public | Rudeness | N | Informal resolution by way of an apology |
| 2 | Member of the public | Change to the name of a community centre | N | The complainant did not respond to a request for clarification in relation to how they considered the Code of Conduct had been breached. |

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

The Council had a budget of £8,272 for Member's attending external training courses in 2017-18 and a small underspend was returned to the general fund at the end of the financial year.

4.2 Legal Implications

The Council has a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members (section 27(1) Localism Act 2011). The Council has adopted a Code dealing with the conduct that is expected of Members and Co-opted Members when they are acting in that capacity (as required by section 27(2) Localism Act 2011).

4.3 Resident Impact Assessment

No resident impacts arise directly from this report.

Background papers: None.

Final Report Clearance

Signed by



24.09.2018

Director of Law and Governance

Date

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