



**Report of: Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Human Resources**

Meeting of	Date	Ward(s)
Audit Committee	20th September 2016	All

Delete as appropriate		<b>Non-exempt</b>
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## **Subject: ANNUAL REPORT ON STANDARDS AND MEMBER CONDUCT**

### **1. Synopsis**

This report provides the annual report from the Monitoring Officer on issues concerning member conduct and complaints, training and promoting high standards of conduct amongst Members.

### **2. Recommendation**

2.1 The Audit Committee note the contents of the annual report.

### **3. Details**

3.1 When the Standards Committee used to meet on a regular basis it produced an annual report on its activities. Following changes to the Constitution the Monitoring Officer is now obliged to produce an annual report to Audit Committee covering issues of member conduct and complaints received, training and promoting high standards of conduct amongst Members.

#### **Member Training and Development**

3.2 Councillors have attended a number of conferences and training courses over the last year as well as attending LGA Leadership Academy Modules. Training has covered Licensing, Treasury Management, Presentation Skills, First Aid and Health and Safety.

3.3 Updates on development opportunities that are provided by London Councils and the Local Government Association are circulated to both the Labour Group Office and the Chief Whip and to Councillor Russell . Many of these events are either free or subsidised.

- 3.4 Basic Induction has taken place with Cllr Champion following the by-election in Barnsbury Ward and further training/briefing will be given once it is known which committees she will be appointed to.

### **Briefings and Updates**

- 3.5 Members have been provided with specific briefings on conduct or governance issues. Areas covered have included Voluntary and Community Sector roles and relationships; councillors personal safety, civic emergencies and data protection.
- 3.6 Staff and councillors who routinely login to the councils network receive a series of pop up compliance messages which give information on a number of areas such as data protection and security, personal data, sharing documents etc.
- 3.7 Once you have read and accepted the information the system logs that you have read and accepted it. However a number of councillors do not login to the council's network and therefore do not receive these reminders.
- 3.8 These could be picked up with a short briefing to members perhaps before a group meeting over the next few months.

### **Financial Declarations**

- 3.9 All Members completed their financial declarations in line with the Code of Conduct when first elected. They are also reminded each year about updating any changes to their circumstances as they occur.
- 3.10 Members were also advised that the question on the financial declarations form relating to licences to occupy land in the borough would cover those Members who rented garages or held parking permits for specific spaces on estates, rather than a general residents parking permit
- 3.11 Copies of these declarations, along with any declarations made at meetings, declarations regarding gifts and hospitality and councillors attendance record at committees are all available on the Council's website.

### **Complaints**

- 3.12 All complaints under the Members Code of Conduct are referred to the Monitoring Officer (the Assistant Chief Executive, Governance and HR) who under the council's procedures for dealing with these complaints has a discretion to decide 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.
- 3.13 No formal complaints have been received against Members during 2015 or to date relating to breaches of the Members Code of Conduct, although some issues have been raised which have not reached that stage.

Members involved	Complainant	Topic	Formal complaint	Outcome
2	Member of the public	Rudeness	N	No detail received
1	Member of the public	Failure to ensure adequate information provision in respect of council tax liability	N	Complaint withdrawn after department responded in relation to service issues.
4	Member of the public	Various	N	Awaiting further detail

## 4. Implications

### 4.1 Financial Implications

None.

### 4.2 Legal Implications

None.

### 4.3 Resident Impact Assessment

No resident impacts arise directly from this report..

### Background papers:

None.

Final Report Clearance

Signed by



Assistant Chief Executive (Governance & HR)

Date

Report author  
Tel

John Lynch, Head of Democratic Services  
020 7527 3002