



City of Westminster

Minutes

Meeting:

Standards Committee

Date of meeting:

**6.30pm on Tuesday 2 December 2008, Westminster
City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP**

Attendees:

Councillors:
Ruth Bush
Rupert D'Cruz
Robert Davis, DL
Angela Hooper
Tim Mitchell
Alastair Moss
Steve Summers

Independent Members:
Lord Richard Best, OBE
The Very Rev John Hall
Lord Dennis Stevenson, CBE

Apologies:

Councillor: Michael Brahams, DL
Elizabeth Peace, CBE

Contact:

Mick Steward

Details:

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1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES

The Chairman, with the approval of the Members present, signed the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2008 as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

3. CODES OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES – A CONSULTATION (see report of the Director of Legal and Administrative Services and Director of Human Resources)

3.1 Peter Large, Head of Legal Services, introduced the report. He outlined the significant elements of the consultation document. The Chairman referred the Committee to the comments of Elizabeth Peace, which had been circulated at the meeting as she was unable to attend.

3.2 Members of the committee sought confirmation that the conviction of a criminal offence did not of itself automatically lead to the imposition of a sanction. It was confirmed that under the proposals the conviction of a criminal offence would be a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct but any sanction would be a matter for the relevant Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee.

Members of the committee asked for the response to reflect, in response to Question 3 that the nature of the office held be included.

It was also suggested that the £25 figure for which it is necessary for gifts and hospitality to be registered to be uplifted in line with inflation each year.

The requirement, introduced as part of the new Model Code in 2007, to declare any relevant gifts and hospitality at meetings had led in some cases to lengthy declarations at meetings. It was suggested that provision could be made to allow the register to be tabled at the meeting to avoid this.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Head of Legal Services be authorised to finalise the response to the consultation having regard to the views expressed by the Committee and the suggested responses set out in the report.
- (ii) That the City Council's Employees Code of Conduct and Handbook be reviewed following the publication of a statutory Code of Conduct for Employees to consider whether any amendment to the local code are appropriate in the light of the statutory code.

4. **REFERENCES TO THE ADJUDICATION PANEL BY A STANDARDS COMMITTEE (see report of the Director of Legal and Administrative Services)**

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

5. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 7.11pm.

CHAIRMAN

DATE