



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

# MINUTES

## Standards Committee

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Standards Committee** held on **Thursday 26th March, 2015**, Rooms 3 & 4 - 17th Floor, City Hall.

**Members Present:** Councillors Judith Warner (Chairman), Ian Adams, David Boothroyd, Ruth Bush, Louise Hyams and Tim Mitchell

**Also Present:** Councillors Judith Warner (Chairman), Ian Adams, David Boothroyd, Ruth Bush, Louise Hyams and Tim Mitchell

**Apologies for Absence:** His Honour Geoffrey Rivlin QC (statutory Independent Person)

#### 1 MEMBERSHIP

There were no changes.

#### 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

#### 3 MINUTES

3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2014 be approved as a correct record.

#### 4 MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME: UPDATE (SEE REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CABINET SECRETARIAT)

4.1 Councillor Mitchell commenced the discussion by outlining the development work undertaken by the Housing, Finance and Customer Services Policy and Scrutiny Committee. This was undertaken as part of the Committee Work Programme but it was noted that some presentations could be of wider benefit to all Members. Some Policy and Scrutiny Committees already do so and this was regarded as good practice.

**Action:** That as part of a wider Member Development programme Policy and Scrutiny Committees, via the Westminster Scrutiny Commission, be

encouraged to offer the opportunity to attend appropriate information gathering sessions to all Members.

4.2 The Committee supported the importance of continuing to develop/train Members and the need to develop a programme. The following suggestions for consideration were made:

- Specific training for Policy and Scrutiny Committee Members in their role.
- Briefing sessions on major forthcoming changes.
- Bus tour of the City.
- Contractor Services
- Finance – How Local Government Finance Works
- Casework
- Key Service area presentations.

4.3 Members also asked that consideration be given to the simplifying of the Members Code or at least adding the principles to the Council diary. Also Members stressed the need for a hard copy of the Key Officer directory to be made available.

#### **Action**

1. That the Members Code be simplified, if possible, and a report be presented to the Standards Committee (**Action:** By Monitoring Officer).
2. That a summary of the simplified code be produced in pocket format and/or included in the front of the Council Diary.
3. That a hard copy of a Directory or Key Officers be produced (**Action:** Members Services).

4.4 It was noted that Member input into any emerging Member Development programme was of vital importance. In particular, the views of Backbench Councillors was regarded to be of particular significance. Accordingly, a workshop, for all Members, with a social element, during June should be arranged to develop the programme.

**Action:** That Officers, in consultation with the Chairman and Councillor Ian Adams, on behalf of the WSC, identify a date/time for the workshop and prepare a programme for the event.

4.5 Geoffrey Rivlin (Independent Person) endorsed the suggestions and welcomed the proposal to develop a properly formulated rolling training and development plan for Members on an ongoing basis. He expressed concern that one Member still remained to be trained on the Members Code of Conduct.

**5 CLOSE OF MEETING**

The Meeting ended at 7.59 pm

**CHAIRMAN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_