



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

# MINUTES

## Standards Committee

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Standards Committee** held on **Thursday 15th March, 2018**, Room 3.4, 3rd Floor, 5 Strand, London, WC2 5HR.

**Members Present:** Councillors Judith Warner (Chairman), David Boothroyd, Ruth Bush, Melvyn Caplan, Brian Connell and Louise Hyams

**Also Present:** Sir Stephen Lamport and Baroness Neuberger.

#### 1 MEMBERSHIP

There were no changes.

#### 2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were none.

#### 3 MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

#### 4 MEMBER COMPLAINTS - ANNUAL REPORT AND RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE (SEE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LAW)

4.1 Tasnim Shawkat, Director of Law, introduced the report and set out the current position in respect of the three complaints. Concern was expressed that no timeframe was given for the completion of investigation. Tasnim responded by saying that her aim was to complete investigations within 28 days but at all times keep the parties informed. It was noted that a framework setting out the role of the Independent Person in investigations had been produced.

4.2 Tasnim Shawkat confirmed that sometimes the complexity of complaints requires that some investigations will take longer. She confirmed that she

was absolutely committed to having complaints dealt with as quickly as possible and as required keeping the various parties informed of progress. In some cases she advised that it may be necessary to allow more time both following the event that led to the complaint and at the investigation stage. Accordingly, some degree of flexibility was required.

- 4.3 Tasnim Shawkat then introduced the consultation which was being carried out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life of local government ethical standards. It was noted that it was open to anyone to contribute as part of the consultation.
- 4.4 The Committee considered each of the questions asked by the consultation and agreed that a smaller panel of Members, including at least one of the Independent Panel Members consulted to produce on behalf of the Committee the final response to the consultation. (Note by the Head of Committee and Governance Services). The final version of the response sent on behalf of the Committee is attached and includes on behalf of the Committee reference to the comments made by the Committee. A report setting out the findings of the review of the Committee on Standards in Public Life will be submitted when available.

**Resolved:**

1. That the “Arrangements for dealing with complaints alleging a breach of the Members’ Code of Conduct” be amended as shown in paragraph 3.2 of the report and paragraph 4.3 (f) of Appendix 1 of the report;
2. That the final response to the consultation be sent by the Director of Law on behalf of the Committee, having consulted the Chairman, Councillors Boothroyd and Caplan and both Independent Persons.

**5 RECORDING OF MEMBER TRAINING (SEE REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMITTEE AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES)**

**Resolved:**

That the Council be recommended to approve additions to Register of Interest form to be completed by all Members and Co-opted Members, as follows:

New Section 10 – Please list, including dates where possible, of all training undertaken to prepare you for your role as a Councillor or to develop his/her in this role.

**6 MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME (SEE REPORT OF THE MEMBER SERVICES MANAGER)**

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

**7 WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKER (SEE REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMITTEE AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES)**

**Resolved:** That the report be noted.

The Meeting ended at 8.39 pm.

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

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