



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Standards Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Standards Committee** held on **Thursday 7th April, 2022**, Rooms 18.01 & 18.03, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Judith Warner (Chairman), David Boothroyd, Ian Adams, Louise Hyams and Patricia McAllister

Also Present: Asif Iqbal and Elizabeth Walters (Independent Persons)

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Richard Beddoe and Shajad Hussain (Independent Person)

1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 It was noted that there were no changes to the membership.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were none.

3 MINUTES

3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2021 be signed by the Chair as a correct record of the proceedings.

4 REVIEW OF THE MEMBER OFFICER PROTOCOL

4.1 Hazel Best, Interim Monitoring Officer, provided an update on the work undertaken so far with regard to the review of the Member/Officer Protocol. It was noted that proposals included ensuring the code of conduct training provided to Members included the Protocol on Member and Officer relations and for all senior officers and new staff to receive briefings on how to work with Members. The Committee was also interested to note that the Interim

Monitoring Officer and the Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison had attended a number of departmental officer meetings to obtain feedback on the current protocol and to request feedback on how this could be updated/ amended. In addition, views of Members via the party whips had been made and this would be followed up after the local elections. The views of Members would also be sought at the code of conduct training which would take place shortly after the local election. A draft revised Protocol on Member and Officer relations would be presented to the Standards Committee on 7 July 2022.

- 4.2 The Committee agreed the timing of the review was appropriate with the local elections due to take place in May. The Committee then discussed how the updated Protocol could make specific reference to Members ward work and in particular issues that covered more than one ward. The importance of the Protocol was stressed, and Members suggested that, once finalised, the updated Protocol be published prominently on the Council website.

4.3 **RESOLVED:**

That the update on the review of the Protocol on Member/Officer relations be noted.

5 **BI-ANNUAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT**

- 5.1 The Senior Committee and Councillor Co-ordinator introduced the item stating that it was considered best practice for the Council to receive an annual or biennial report in relation to standards.

- 5.2 The Committee considered and commented on the draft report which covered the Committee's work between March 2020 and March 2022. Members were advised that the provision of such a report emphasised the importance the Council placed on the profile of ethical standards across the organisation and afforded the opportunity to highlight key achievements and areas of good practice whilst identifying any requirements for improvement.

- 5.3 The Committee welcomed the report but suggested that the name of the report be amended to the Biennial Standards Committee Report. The report was considered comprehensive and highlighted the extensive and wide-ranging work the Committee and independent persons had undertaken over the period. The Committee wished to place on thanks the work of the Chair, Councillor Judith Warner, who was attending her last Standards Committee meeting, for all her hard work and efforts in ensuring high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members of the authority were promoted and maintained.

5.4 **RESOLVED:**

That subject to the recommended changes being incorporated the report be approved and recommended to Full Council for noting.

6 WORK PROGRAMME

- 6.1 The Committee noted the 2022-23 Work Programme and was asked to consider any items they would like to come to future meetings.
- 6.2 Following discussions the Committee agreed to include an item on the Annual Review of the Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED: That an Annual Code of Conduct Review be included on the 2022-23 Work Programme.

The Meeting ended at 6.57 pm

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____