



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Standards Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Standards Committee** held on **Thursday 19th November, 2015**, Rooms 3 & 4 - 17th Floor, City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Judith Warner (Chairman), Ian Adams, Barbara Arzymanow, David Boothroyd, Ruth Bush and Brian Connell

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Louise Hyams

1 MEMBERSHIP AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Barbara Arzymanow was substituting for Councillor Louise Hyams.

The Chairman welcomed Sir Stephen Lamport, recently appointed Independent Person and Geoffrey Rivlin who was attending his last meeting as an Independent Person. The Chairman thanked Geoffrey Rivlin for his service on behalf of the Council and wished him well in the future.

At the request of the Chairman, Tasnim Shawkat, Director of Law, gave an overview of the duties of the Independent Persons.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3 MINUTES

3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2015 be approved as a correct record.

4 UPDATE ON ISSUES FROM LAST MEETING (SEE REPORT OF THE HEAD OF THE COMMITTEE AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES)

4.1 Members noted the updates as set out in the report and asked to be updated further in respect of the following:

Directory: All Members of the Committee to be advised of the specific date of when the Council directory will be published.

Member Development: Noted that Members will require continuous updating on significant changes in legislation.

Members IT: Members to be reminded of how to access the WIRE using a VPN token.

Report Writing Course: Members asked to be advised of attendance at the course.

It was noted that a more detailed report on Scrutiny Training/ Development would be submitted to the WSC on 30 November.

A further update on Member Development Training to be submitted to the next meeting. Geoffrey Rivlin advised that Judges were required to undertake refresher training every 12 months.

5 REVIEW OF MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT/COMPLAINT (SEE REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMITTEE AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES)

- 5.1 The Committee accepted the need to review the Code of Conduct which had not been fully reviewed since its original adoption on 1 July 2012. It noted that only limited time had been available then to produce the Code and that since then lessons had been learned across the sector.
- 5.2 The Committee recognised that once a review had been undertaken further awareness sessions should be carried out on the Code and other key Member duties.
- 5.3 In agreeing that a review should be carried out the Committee advised that it would welcome the input of the Independent Persons. Both Sir Stephen Lamport and Geoffrey Rivlin spoke of the importance of a strong cultural ethical leadership.

Resolved:

- 1. That a review of the Members' Code of Conduct be carried out during 2016, the details of how the review is to be conducted to be discussed with the Chairman.
- 2. That the Committee note the position in respect of complaints made alleging a breach of the Code in the last 12 months as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The Chairman advised for the information of the Committee of the circumstances which recently led to the Council having to change Auditors.

The Chairman asked that a further meeting be arranged for March.

The Meeting ended at 8.02 pm

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____