



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

# MINUTES

## Standards Committee

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Standards Committee** held on **Thursday 7th December, 2017**, 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 Jacqui Wilkinson

**Also Present:** Sir Stephen Lamport

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Louise Hyams and Baroness Neuberger

#### 1 MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Jacqui Wilkinson was replacing Councillor Louise Hyams.

#### 2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were none.

#### 3 MINUTES

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

#### 4 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (SEE REPORT OF THE MEMBER SERVICES MANAGER)

- 4.1 Janis Best (Member Services Manager) introduced the report. She advised that the induction programme outlined in the report would be followed by the Member Induction Programme, dates for which had been included in the Council's Programme of Meetings.
- 4.2 It was intended as part of the induction programme to hold two topics per evening. These sessions would include the opportunity to speak to the Council's IT team regarding the support available.
- 4.3 Each Member then commented on what they saw as the required main elements of the induction programme. The Committee stressed the need for all induction material to use plain English and be free of jargon. It was also

suggested that the key dates be sent to the Party Whips so that they could promote these. It was also noted that the dates would be sent to all candidates so that those successful would have had early notice of them.

- 4.4 Councillor Wilkinson, who had been elected at a by-election, stressed the importance of a contact list of key people and for this to be kept up-to-date. She indicated her support for a maximum of 2 topics per evening at induction sessions.
- 4.5 Councillor Melvyn Caplan stressed the importance of the induction sessions involving officers who are involved in the actual delivery of services. It was important for Members to know who these officers were. He added that the programming of sessions correctly was important and suggested that the voluntary sector be included either as part of the induction programme or the Member Development Programme. He added that Planning and Licensing was important for backbenchers. Councillor Brian Connell emphasised the need for Policy and Scrutiny to be included prominently in the induction programme as newly elected Members were likely to be appointed to these at least initially. He added that getting Members used to receiving their Committee papers electronically was important.
- 4.6 Councillor Connell suggested that some form of continuous professional development be established whereby Members undertake a form of online testing be established alongside the Member Development Programme.
- 4.7 Councillor Ruth Bush endorsed the proposal to include officers involved in service delivery at the induction sessions. She also recommended that a tour of some areas/front line services not normally seen be included in addition to a programme of ward walks for Ward Members. This approach was endorsed by the Committee.
- 4.8 Councillor David Boothroyd asked that the CE review the arrangements for the taking of the Acceptance of Office. He encouraged the use of electronic devices for the conduct of Council business and that for a forthcoming session partnership working. He also stressed the need for Members to have details of key departmental contacts.
- 4.9 Sir Stephen Lamport advised that the Code of Conduct session should be regarded as a compulsory session on the strong recommendation of the Committee. This was supported by the Committee.
- 4.10 The Chairman summed up the discussion and advised that officers would proceed to make adjustments to the proposed programme based on the views expressed. The induction programme would then be finalised in consultation with the Party Whips.

## **5 TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE (SEE RERPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMITTEE AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES)**

Noted.

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

Noted.

**7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

The Meeting ended at 7.46 pm

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

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