



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

Standards Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Standards Committee** held on **Thursday 13th July, 2023**, Room 18.05, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Ruth Bush (Chair), Md Shamsed Chowdhury, Sara Hassan and Tim Mitchell

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

1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Louise Hyams.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES

3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2023 be signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings.

4 SAFETY PROTOCOL FOR COUNCILLORS

4.1 The Committee received a report which provided an update on the steps taken to ensure the Council had measures in place to support Councillors in maintaining their personal safety and help provide support and advice to Councillors where necessary.

4.2 Members were pleased to note the measures that had been put in place to assist Councillors with their personal safety and in particular welcomed the introduction of a Westminster specific Safety Protocol for Councillors. It was felt that the document was clear and concise and would be of particular use to new Members. The Committee requested that some of the wording of the

Protocol be amended slightly to specify that the Monitoring Officer should be the main point of contact if any Councillors had concerns. It was also requested that the Protocol make explicit reference to confidentiality if any incidents were raised. To raise the profile of the Protocol and make Members aware of the updates the Committee suggested a link to it be circulated to all Members.

- 4.3 To provide further advice to Members the Committee requested that extracts from the LGA guidance on safety for Councillors be circulated as this would complement the personal safety training session planned for later in the year. The Director of Law and Governance also confirmed that she would be holding drop-in sessions for Councillors where they could attend to discuss any experiences they've had, to provide advice and let any trends/themes inform policy development.

RESOLVED:

That

- 1) The Safety Protocol for Members be updated and circulated;
- 2) Extracts from the LGA Guidance on Councillor Safety be circulated to Members; and
- 3) Drop-in sessions for Councillors be arranged to discuss personal safety experiences and provide advice.

5 WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

- 5.1 The Committee noted the 2023-24 Work Programme and was asked to consider any items they would like to come to future meetings.
- 5.2 Members discussed the Question-and-Answer Session to be held with the Leader and potential topics for discussion.
- 5.3 The Committee also discussed the work previously undertaken on the Member/Officer Protocol and were pleased to note that the Chief Executive and the Director of Law and Governance were providing training to all of the Executive Management Team and Directors, the contents of which would then be cascaded through each directorate.
- 5.4 The Committee also offered its congratulations to Asif Iqbal MBE on his appointment to the British Sign Language Advisory Board.

The Meeting ended at 7.39pm.

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____