



# STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 15th July, 2015

at 6.30 pm

Room 3, Assembly Hall, Hackney Town Hall,  
Mare Street, London E8 1EA

**Committee Membership:**

Councillor Sophie Linden (Chair), Councillor Ben Hayhurst,  
Councillor Sophie Linden (Chair), Councillor Sally  
Mulready, Councillor Clare Potter and Councillor Jessica  
Webb (Vice-Chair)

**Co-optees:**

Julia Bennett, George Gross, Adedoja Labinjo and Onagete  
Louison

**Gifty Edila**  
Corporate Director  
Legal, HR and Regulatory Services

**Contact:**  
Robert Walker  
Governance Services  
Tel: 020 8356 3578  
Email: [Robert.Walker@Hackney.gov.uk](mailto:Robert.Walker@Hackney.gov.uk)

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting

Dates of next meeting – 21<sup>st</sup> January 2015

# AGENDA

## Wednesday, 15th July, 2015

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item No	Title	Page No
1	Apologies for absence	
2	Declarations of interest	
3	Minutes of the previous meetings	
a	Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2015	(Pages 1 - 6)
b	Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 20 May 2015	(Pages 7 - 8)
4	Standards Committee Terms of Reference	9 - 10
	The Standards Committee is asked to note its terms of reference.	
5	Standards Committee Annual Report 2014/15	11 - 22
6	Standards Committee Draft Work Programme 2015/16	23 - 28
7	Any other business	

# ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS

Hackney Council's Code of Conduct applies to **all** Members of the Council, the Mayor and co-opted Members.

This note is intended to provide general guidance for Members on declaring interests. However, you may need to obtain specific advice on whether you have an interest in a particular matter. If you need advice, you can contact:

- The Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services;
- The Legal Adviser to the committee; or
- Governance Services.

If at all possible, you should try to identify any potential interest you may have before the meeting so that you and the person you ask for advice can fully consider all the circumstances before reaching a conclusion on what action you should take.

## 1. Do you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter on the agenda or which is being considered at the meeting?

You will have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter if it:

- relates to an interest that you have already registered in Parts A and C of the Register of Pecuniary Interests of you or your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner;
- relates to an interest that should be registered in Parts A and C of the Register of Pecuniary Interests of your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner, but you have not yet done so; or
- affects your well-being or financial position or that of your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner.

## 2. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in an item on the agenda you must:

- Declare the existence and nature of the interest (in relation to the relevant agenda item) as soon as it becomes apparent to you (subject to the rules regarding sensitive interests).
- You must leave the room when the item in which you have an interest is being discussed. You cannot stay in the meeting room or public gallery whilst discussion of the item takes place and you cannot vote on the matter. In addition, you must not seek to improperly influence the decision.
- If you have, however, obtained dispensation from the Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee you may remain in the room and participate in the meeting. If dispensation has been granted it will stipulate the extent of your involvement, such as whether you can only be present to make representations, provide evidence or whether you are able to fully participate and vote on the matter in which you have a pecuniary interest.

### 3. Do you have any other non-pecuniary interest on any matter on the agenda which is being considered at the meeting?

You will have 'other non-pecuniary interest' in a matter if:

- i. It relates to an external body that you have been appointed to as a Member or in another capacity; or
- ii. It relates to an organisation or individual which you have actively engaged in supporting.

### 4. If you have other non-pecuniary interest in an item on the agenda you must:

- i. Declare the existence and nature of the interest (in relation to the relevant agenda item) as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- ii. You may remain in the room, participate in any discussion or vote provided that contractual, financial, consent, permission or licence matters are not under consideration relating to the item in which you have an interest.
- iii. If you have an interest in a contractual, financial, consent, permission or licence matter under consideration, you must leave the room unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee. You cannot stay in the room or public gallery whilst discussion of the item takes place and you cannot vote on the matter. In addition, you must not seek to improperly influence the decision. Where members of the public are allowed to make representations, or to give evidence or answer questions about the matter you may, with the permission of the meeting, speak on a matter then leave the room. Once you have finished making your representation, you must leave the room whilst the matter is being discussed.
- iv. If you have been granted dispensation, in accordance with the Council's dispensation procedure you may remain in the room. If dispensation has been granted it will stipulate the extent of your involvement, such as whether you can only be present to make representations, provide evidence or whether you are able to fully participate and vote on the matter in which you have a non pecuniary interest.

### Further Information

Advice can be obtained from Gifty Edila, Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services, on 020 8356 3265 or email [Gifty.Edila@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:Gifty.Edila@hackney.gov.uk)



FS 566728

## RIGHTS OF PRESS AND PUBLIC TO REPORT ON MEETINGS

Where a meeting of the Council and its committees are open to the public, the press and public are welcome to report on meetings of the Council and its committees, through any audio, visual or written methods and may use digital and social media providing they do not disturb the conduct of the meeting and providing that the person reporting or providing the commentary is present at the meeting.

Those wishing to film, photograph or audio record a meeting are asked to notify the Council's Monitoring Officer by noon on the day of the meeting, if possible, or any time prior to the start of the meeting or notify the Chair at the start of the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer, or the Chair of the meeting, may designate a set area from which all recording must take place at a meeting.

The Council will endeavour to provide reasonable space and seating to view, hear and record the meeting. If those intending to record a meeting require any other reasonable facilities, notice should be given to the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting and will only be provided if practicable to do so.

The Chair shall have discretion to regulate the behaviour of all those present recording a meeting in the interests of the efficient conduct of the meeting. Anyone acting in a disruptive manner may be required by the Chair to cease recording or may be excluded from the meeting. Disruptive behaviour may include: moving from any designated recording area; causing excessive noise; intrusive lighting; interrupting the meeting; or filming members of the public who have asked not to be filmed.

All those visually recording a meeting are requested to only focus on recording councillors, officers and the public who are directly involved in the conduct of the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will ask any members of the public present if they have objections to being visually recorded. Those visually recording a meeting are asked to respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be filmed or photographed. Failure by someone recording a meeting to respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be filmed and photographed may result in the Chair instructing them to cease recording or in their exclusion from the meeting.

If a meeting passes a motion to exclude the press and public then in order to consider confidential or exempt information, all recording must cease and all recording equipment must be removed from the meeting room. The press and public are not permitted to use any means which might enable them to see or hear the proceedings whilst they are excluded from a meeting and confidential or exempt information is under consideration.

Providing oral commentary during a meeting is not permitted.

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## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 2015

- Councillors Present:** Councillor Sophie Linden in the Chair  
Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Sally Mulready,  
Cllr Clare Potter and Cllr Jessica Webb (Vice-Chair)
- Co-optees Present:** Julia Bennett, Adedaja Labinjo and Elizabeth Coates-Thummel
- Apologies:** George Gross and Onagete Louison
- Officers in Attendance:** Gifty Edila (Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services), Gregory Lane, Christine Peacock (Assistant Director ICT) and Robert Walker (Governance Services Officer)
- Also in Attendance:** Jonathan Stopes-Roe (Independent Person)

### 1 Apologies for absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence are listed above.

### 2 Declarations of interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

### 3 Minutes of the previous meeting - 17 July 2014

- 3.1 **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014 be approved as a true and accurate record.

#### Matters arising

- 3.2 Under matters arising, Elizabeth Coates-Thummel referred to the issue she raised under item 1 at the previous meeting, in respect to who should chair the Standards Committee, and asked whether there would be opportunity to discuss this matter further.
- 3.3 The Chair explained that as there were no further Committee meetings in the 2014/15 Municipal Year she believed that the issue of who should chair the Committee should be considered by Members prior to the Council's AGM, when appointments to the Committee would be made for the following Municipal Year. The Chair advised that, as her as a Cabinet portfolio included ethical governance matters, this would consequently also be a matter for the Mayor to consider given that he determined Cabinet Member portfolios.

#### 4 Guidance for Members on the Use of ICT - 4th Annual Report

- 4.1 Chris Peacock, Assistant Director of ICT, introduced the 4<sup>th</sup> annual report on Guidance for Members on the Use of ICT. Chris Peacock explained that she was pleased to report that there was good compliance with the Guidance.
- 4.2 The Committee was advised that, as set out in paragraph 6.5 of the report, there was one incident during the current Municipal Year where a laptop was lost on public transport. This matter had been reported to the transport authorities and investigated by the information security team, who believed that the laptop did not contain any personal data but could not say conclusively that there had not been a data security breach as the laptop was never recovered. Including this incident, it was noted that there had been 11 laptops lost over 2014/15 across all Council staff and Members.
- 4.3 Chris Peacock explained that following the 2014 local elections, 21 new Members were elected to the Council and 14 of these new Members had opted to be provided with Council issued ICT equipment. The Council had also retrieved equipment from those Members who had stood down at the election or were not re-elected. This equipment was data cleansed and then allocated for re-use, spares or disposal as appropriate.
- 4.4 Chris Peacock also explained that the Council had recently rolled out new computer software for Council officers and that the Council was now looking at what ICT software and equipment should be provided to Members to ensure that they had the necessary tools to undertake their duties. Cllr Ann Munn was undertaking a Member-led review of this issue and Members would be surveyed to understand their views and needs. Christine Peacock advised that, depending on what new tools were provided to Members, it may be necessary to subsequently update the Guidance for Members on the Use of ICT, which was issued in 2011.
- 4.5 There was then a discussion of the report. Following a question from Councillor Hayhurst, Chris Peacock advised that the Council could remotely data cleanse devices provided that they had been fitted with an application that enabled the Council to do so.
- 4.6 Councillor Hayhurst also urged the Council, as part of its review of ICT services for Members, to consider providing councillors with mobile phones. The Chair advised that this was not an issue for the Standards Committee but that this should be communicated through the pending survey of Members.
- 4.7 In response to a question from Councillor Webb, Chris Peacock noted that there were instances where emails were incorrectly blocked by the firewall however, staff were alerted when emails sent to them were quarantined and had the ability to check and release any emails which were mistakenly blocked. Chris Peacock also advised that the Council did not have resources to check all emails blocked but staff did do random surveys and responded to feedback from officers and Members.
- 4.8 Councillor Mulready urged the Council to do more to frequently remind Members, particularly those newly elected, of the Guidance on ICT to ensure



that Members did not inadvertently breach the Guidance. Chris Peacock noted this point and agreed to pick this matter up as an action following the meeting.

4.9 **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **5 Review of the Register of Members' and Co-optees' Declaration of Interests Forms**

- 5.1 Gifty Edila, Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services introduced the annual review of the Register of Members' and Co-optees declaration of interest forms. Gifty Edila advised that, in her role as Monitoring Officer, she undertook an annual review to check that Members and Co-optees were updating their forms and to also check for any omissions or inaccuracies based on her knowledge. Gifty Edila explained that, in addition to the annual review, she also checked register of interest forms whenever a new or revised form was submitted.
- 5.2 The Standards Committee noted that, as set out in section 6 of the report, all Members and Co-optees had completed a register of form, including all those newly elected Members. Gifty Edila advised that she had identified during the review that three Members had given their spouses name, even though this was not legally required to be disclosed, and that two Members had omitted their membership of outside bodies to which they were appointed to by the Council. These Members had been contacted and advised to update forms.
- 5.3 Gifty Edila advised that she was pleased to report that Members were frequently updating their forms in a timely fashion and explained that officers were continuing to support them in completing their forms through training sessions and through specific advice provided on request. It was noted that a reminder would be sent in May 2015 inviting all Members and Co-optees to review their forms to check them for accuracy and to offer further training on the Code of Conduct and declaring pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.
- 5.4 Councillor Hayhurst queried whether Members could be sent their register of interests forms when asked to complete a 3<sup>rd</sup> party related transactions form. Gifty Edila explained that the 3<sup>rd</sup> party related transaction forms were managed by the finance directorate and had to be completed at the end of each financial year by Members. However, Gifty Edila agreed to liaise with relevant officers from the finance team to request that Members were reminded to review their register of interests form when being asked to complete a 3<sup>rd</sup> party related transaction form.
- 5.5 Following a question from Councillor Webb, Gifty Edila explained the process for Members updating their register of interest forms. Gifty Edila advised that Members were welcome to initially send a draft form via email for her to check however, as register of interests forms were a legal document, Members were required to sign and date any amended form.
- 5.6 **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **6 Member Induction, Training and Development Programme: Progress Update**

- 6.1 Greg Lane, Head of Governance Services, presented the report on Member Induction, Training and Development to the Committee, which focused particularly on training provided to Members following the 2014 local elections. Greg Lane explained that over 20 in-house training sessions were provided for Members following the local elections, which included directorate introductory sessions and introductory sessions for particular service areas. The core aims of the programme were to ensure that Members were equipped with knowledge of how the Council operated, in order to fulfil their respective roles on Council committees and as community leaders, and to support high ethical standards.
- 6.2 An appendix to the report outlined all training sessions provided to Members since May 2014 and also set out what sessions would be provided to Members over 2015. Greg Lane advised the Committee that this training programme had incorporated feedback from Members, including those Members who had stood down in May 2014, and comments from Cabinet and Hackney Management Team.
- 6.3 Greg Lane explained that feedback had been invited after all training sessions and overall Members had rated training sessions held since May 2014 as good to excellent. Members had also commented that they would appreciate further training on the Code of Conduct, leadership and ward forums, licensing and planning. Members would however, be surveyed later in February 2015 to review if their training needs had changed.
- 6.4 Greg Lane also advised that, following a request made previously by the Standards Committee, the Council had been developing e-learning training modules for Members which would be rolled-out to Members in due course. It was hoped that these e-learning courses would supplement training sessions and provide Members with a flexible and convenient way to develop their learning and knowledge.
- 6.5 There was then a discussion of the report. Julia Bennett welcomed the report and its detailed information on the scope and attendance at training. Julia Bennett queried whether there were any new Members whose attendance at training sessions had been low. Gifty Edila advised that she had been receiving regular updates on attendance at training sessions following the local elections and explained that the general picture was that there had been very good attendance by new Members as well as by those re-elected Members, who were often attending to support their colleagues. Gifty Edila also emphasised that all Members and substitutes of the Licensing Committee and Planning Sub-Committee were required to undertake relevant training before taking their seats on these bodies and that there had been good attendance at Code of Conduct training sessions.
- 6.6 In response to questions from Elizabeth Coates-Thummel and Adedoja Labinjo, Gifty Edila advised that once the e-learning course had been tested it would be available to all co-optees and that they would be informed once the modules were live.

- 6.7 Councillor Mulready encouraged the Council to undertake a comprehensive assessment of how Members could be supported in the event that they became incapacitated or disabled whilst in office and consider what training could be provided on this issue. Gifty Edila agreed that this was an important matter and advised that Greg Lane and Members Services would be instructed to draft a paper looking at how the Council could support Members in instances where they became incapacitated and how Members were supported generally, covering issues such as maternity and paternity support. It was noted that Standards Committee was not the correct body to oversee this paper but the Committee was advised that officers would report to the Chair, in her role at the relevant lead Cabinet Member.
- 6.8 Councillor Clare Potter commented that, as a new Member, generally she found the training programme to be excellent and provided her with a good understanding of how the Council worked. Councillor Webb also welcomed the first aid training provided as part of the training programme.
- 6.9 Members of the Committee suggested that the training programme should also include disability awareness and equalities training.
- 6.10 The Chair commented that she believed it would be useful for Members of the Licensing Committee and Planning Sub-Committees to discuss Code of Conduct issues to ensure that all Members were aware of the requirements of the Code and felt able to raise any queries or concerns that they may have. The Chair agreed to suggest this to the chair of the Licensing Committee and Gifty Edila advised that she would raise this point with the chair of the Planning Sub-Committee and the Assistant Director of Planning.
- 6.10 **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **7 Any other business**

### **Thanks to Elizabeth Coates-Thummel**

- 7.1 The Chair informed the Committee that Elizabeth Coates-Thummel was resigning from her role as a co-optee. The Chair explained that Elizabeth Coates-Thummel had been a co-optee of the Committee since 2008 and formally thanked her for her contribution.

### **Role of the Committee**

- 7.2 The Chair raised the issue of the future role of the Committee. The Chair explained that she believed it was necessary for the Council to maintain a Standards Committee however, she was aware that often the Committee did not have a lot of business to consider and was only noting reports and very rarely had complaints to consider. The Chair was particularly aware of the impact this would have on Co-optees who would have to travel to the Council for short meetings where little business was considered.
- 7.3 Elizabeth Coates-Thummel advised that the reduced role of the Committee, following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011 and changes to the Committee's terms of reference, was a factor that contributed to her deciding to resign. However, Elizabeth Coates-Thummel explained that she was not aware of any solution to this issue.

- 7.4 Councillor Webb agreed that there was not necessarily any solution that could change the workings of the Committee. Councillor Webb spoke of how the Localism Act 2011 had imposed a new ethical governance structure on local government and had altered a regime that had previously been operating effectively in her view. From her experience, other local authorities who also received low numbers of complaints were also struggling to identify a clear role and work pattern.
- 7.5 Adedoja Labinjo queried whether it was worthwhile contacting other local authorities to see how their ethical governance arrangements were functioning. Gifty Edila advised that she met with monitoring officers from other councils frequently and the general picture was that only those councils which received high numbers of complaints were busy. Gifty Edila emphasised that the Localism Act 2011 imposed a duty to promote high ethical conduct amongst Members. Consequently, Gifty Edila believed that, other than the Committee overseeing the provision of training to Members and having oversight of Members compliance in submitting their register of interests forms, there was little other work the Committee could undertake.
- 7.6 The Chair noted the views made during the discussion and explained that this would be an issue that would continue to be monitored.

**Duration of the meeting:** 6.30 - 7.22 pm

**Signed**

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**Chair of Committee**

**Contact:**

Robert Walker, Governance Services



## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EXTRAORDINARY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 20TH MAY, 2015

**Councillors Present:** Councillor Sophie Linden in the Chair  
Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Sally Mulready,  
Cllr Clare Potter and Cllr Jessica Webb (Vice-Chair)

### 1 Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of the Standards Committee

Councillor Sally Mulready proposed that Deputy Mayor Linden be elected to serve as Chair of the Standards Committee for the 2015/16 Municipal Year. This was duly seconded by Councillor Clare Potter.

There were no other nominations.

**RESOLVED** that Deputy Mayor Linden be elected to serve as Chair of the Standards Committee for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

Councillor Sally Mulready proposed that Councillor Jessica Webb be elected to serve as Vice Chair of the Standards Committee for the 2015/16 Municipal Year. This was duly seconded by Councillor Clare Potter.

There were no other nominations.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Jessica Webb be elected to serve as Vice Chair of the Standards Committee for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

**Signed**

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**Chair of Committee**

**Contact:**

Robert Walker, Governance Services

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## **Standard Committee Terms of Reference**

1. To review and maintain oversight of the Council's ethical framework and procedures and make reports and recommendations accordingly;
2. To review and maintain oversight of the conduct of Members and co-opted members of the Council and assist them in upholding high ethical standards;
3. To advise Full Council and its Committees on the adoption of a Members' Code of Conduct, codes of practice and protocols relating to ethical governance matters;
4. To hear and consider complaints made against Members and co-opted members under the Code of Conduct, codes of practice or protocols;
5. To adopt procedures for considering complaints made under the Code of Conduct, codes of practice or protocols;
6. To consider whether to grant applications for dispensation to Members and co-opted members, in accordance with Members' Code of Conduct; and
7. To maintain oversight of ethical governance training provided to Members and co-opted members and make reports and recommendations accordingly.

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**STANDARDS COMMITTEE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15**

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**15 July 2015**

**COUNCIL**

**25 November 2015**

**CLASSIFICATION:**

**Open**

**WARD(S) AFFECTED**

**All Wards**

**Gifty Edila, Corporate Director, Legal, HR and Regulatory Services**

## **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report gives an overview of the work and activities of the Standards Committee over the past year and provides information on the monitoring of the Members' Code of Conduct.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **That the Standards Committee considers the Annual Report for 2014/15, as attached at Appendix 1, and endorse it for submission to Council.**
- 2.2 **That Council notes the Standards Committee's Annual Report for 2014/15, as attached at Appendix 1.**

## **3. RELATED DECISIONS**

- 3.1 This is the third Annual Report of the new Standards Committee established by the Council on 1 July 2012. Previous Annual Reports were noted by Council at its meetings on 26 June 2013 and 22 October 2014.

## **4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 This report sets out the work and activities of the Standards Committee over the previous municipal year and therefore does not contain any potential financial implications.

## **5. COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, HR AND REGULATORY SERVICES**

- 5.1 The Council has a legal duty under the Localism Act 2011, to promote and maintain high standards of conduct of Members and co-opted Members in public office.
- 5.2 The Council therefore established a Standards Committee to help promote and uphold high standards of conduct amongst Members and co-opted Members.

## **6. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT**

- 6.1 This Annual Report is submitted to Council in line with best practice for the Council to maintain an overview of the work of the Standards Committee. This is the third Annual Report of the Standards Committee established by the Council following implementation of the Localism Act 2011 and the introduction of related ethical governance arrangements.

- 6.2 In upholding high standards the Committee monitors and makes recommendations on the Members' Code of Conduct and considers complaints made under the Code.
- 6.3 The Standards Committee during 2014/15 undertook work in the following areas, which are explained in further detail in Appendix 1 of this report:
- Monitoring the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct and related training following the 2014 Local Government elections;
  - Monitoring the Members Induction Programme following the 2014 Local Government elections;
  - Review of the Register of Interests; and
  - Consideration of a report on the Guidance for Members on Use of ICT.

**Gifty Edila**  
**Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services**

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Standards Committee Annual Report 2014/15

<b>Report Author</b>	Robert Walker, Governance Services 0208 356 3578 <a href="mailto:Robert.Walker@hackney.gov.uk">Robert.Walker@hackney.gov.uk</a>
<b>Comments of the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources</b>	Daksha Chauhan Financial Adviser for CYPS & LHRR 0208 356 2974 <a href="mailto:Daksha.Chauhan@hackney.gov.uk">Daksha.Chauhan@hackney.gov.uk</a>
<b>Comments of the Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services</b>	Alice Prince Senior Corporate Lawyer 020 8356 6584 <a href="mailto:Alice.Prince@hackney.gov.uk">Alice.Prince@hackney.gov.uk</a>

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15**

**1. Introduction from Councillor Sophie Linden, Chair of the Committee and Cabinet Member for ethical governance matters**

This report provides an overview of the Committee's work in the 2014/15 Municipal Year, in what was the Committee's third year since its establishment by the Council following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011. This Annual Report outlines the key areas of work undertaken by the Committee during 2014/15 as well as looking at future work and challenges.

I am pleased to report that Members and co-opted members continue to uphold high ethical standards and that the new ethical governance framework introduced in July 2012 is well embedded.

At its first meeting of the Municipal Year on 17 July 2014, the Committee agreed its work programme and held one other meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015.

It is regrettable that the opposition parties have decided again not to take up their place on the Standards Committee for the 2015/16 Municipal Year. The Committee functions in an independent and non-party political way. It will continue to retain the places for the opposition parties in the hope that they will be taken up.

**2. Membership**

For 2014/15, membership of the Committee was as follows:

- Cllr Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor, ethical governance portfolio holder and Chair of the Committee;
- Four non-executive Council Members – Councillors Ben Hayhurst, Sally Mulready, Clare Potter, and Jessica Webb (vice Chair) (plus one vacancy); and
- Five non-voting co-opted members – Julia Bennett, Elizabeth Coates-Thummel, George Gross, Adedoja Labinjo and Onagete Louison.

Cllrs Linden and Webb were elected as chair and vice-chair of the Committee, respectively, for 2014/15 at the meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

The table below outlines Members' and co-optees' attendance at Standards Committee meetings during the 2014/15 Municipal Year. As ever, Members and co-optees had a large number of alternative commitments such as other public meetings, ward commitments, representing the Council on outside

bodies and work commitments, and were therefore not always available to attend every meeting of the Committee. However, there was high attendance at Committee meetings during 2014/15.

Member	Meeting date	
	17/07/2014	16/02/2015
Cllr Sophie Linden (Chair)	P	P
Cllr Jessica Webb (Vice Chair)	P	P
Cllr Ben Hayhurst	A	P
Cllr Sally Mulready	P	P
Cllr Clare Potter	P	P
Julia Bennett	A	P
Elizabeth Coates-Thummel	P	P
George Gross	A	A
Adedoja Labinjo	P	P
Onagete Louison	A	A

Key:

P = Present

A = Apologies for absence

Elizabeth Coates-Thummel resigned from her role as a co-optee on the Committee at the end of the 2014/15 Municipal Year. The Committee would like to place on record its thanks to Elizabeth Coates-Thummel who joined the previous Standards Committee in 2008 as an Independent Member, and who also served on the Independent Remuneration Panel.

### **3. Terms of reference 2014/15**

The Standards Committee operated within the following terms of reference for 2014/15 Municipal Year –

1. To review and maintain oversight of the Council's ethical framework and procedures and make reports and recommendations accordingly;
2. To review and maintain oversight of the conduct of Members and co-opted members of the Council and assist them in upholding high ethical standards;

3. To advise Full Council and its Committees on the adoption of a Members' Code of Conduct, codes of practice and protocols relating to ethical governance matters;
4. To hear and consider complaints made against Members and co-opted members under the Code of Conduct, codes of practice or protocols;
5. To adopt procedures for considering complaints made under the Code of Conduct, codes of practice or protocols;
6. To consider whether to grant applications for dispensation to Members and co-opted members, in accordance with Members' Code of Conduct; and
7. To maintain oversight of ethical governance training provided to Members and co-opted members and make reports and recommendations accordingly.

#### **4. Training on the Members' Code of Conduct**

All Members on their election to office and co-optees on their appointment are required to sign a declaration confirming that they will abide by the Members' Code of Conduct. It is important for them to have good knowledge of the requirements of the Code. Similarly, officers who work directly with Members and co-optees need to have a good understanding of the Code in order to give Members effective support. The Committee received reports during the 2013/14 Municipal Year on the proposed induction programme and maintained oversight of training during the 2014/15 Municipal Year in order to ensure that all Members, but particularly those newly elected following the local elections held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014, received appropriate training.

The Committee was briefed at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014 and was advised that a Code of Conduct training session was held on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014, and was attended by 22 Members. The Committee was also updated that all Councillors had duly completed and returned their Declaration of Acceptance of Office forms along with their Declaration of Interests forms.

A further Code of Conduct training session was also held on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2014. Both training sessions were presented by Gifty Edila (Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services Directorate). Gifty Edila also has the statutory role as the Council's 'Monitoring Officer'. The Head and Deputy Head of Communications and Consultations also provided training at the sessions on the Council's protocols for communicating with residents, journalists and wider stakeholders.

The sessions covered:

- How the Council works – functions of the Council; legal framework; and decision making

- Members' Code of Conduct
  - History of ethical framework;
  - Legal obligations on the Council;
  - Legal obligations on Members;
  - Application of the Code;
  - The duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct – 7 Nolan Principles;
  - Predetermination;
  - The Register of Interests for Members;
  - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests;
  - Sensitive Interests;
  - Other Interests;
  - Granting Dispensations;
  - Participation in meetings;
- The role of the Independent Person for Standards
- The role of the Council's Standards Committee
- Sitting on Outside Bodies
- Process for handling alleged breaches of the Code
- Media handling and reputation management; use of social media; working with the Council's Communications Service

Of the 21 newly elected Members in May 2014, 19 had attended either the training session on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014 or 4<sup>th</sup> August 2014. One other newly elected Member attended a one-to-one training session with the Monitoring Officer. Only 1 remaining newly elected Member did not take up any training on offer but was sent a copy of the training pack. The Chair shall be writing to this Member advising them of the importance of undertaking training on the Code of Conduct and encouraging them to attend a future session.

On consideration of a report on Member Induction, Training and Development Programme as whole at its meeting 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015, the Committee agreed to recommend that the Licensing Committee and Planning Sub-Committee should hold informal sessions to discuss Code of Conduct issues. This would enable Members to discuss any matters that may have arisen over the previous municipal year, as well as re-enforcing the particular need of Members of the Licensing Committee and Planning Sub-Committee to adhere to the Licensing and Planning Codes of Practice, respectively, as well as to the Members' Code of Conduct.

Committee and sub-committee chairs were also requested to remind Members, at the first meeting of the 2015/16 Municipal Year of their respective committee, to be mindful of their responsibilities under the Code of Conduct and any relevant Code of Practice at all times. In particular, it was requested that Members be referred to the guidance published in each agenda and be encouraged to contact the Monitoring Officer for advice prior to a meeting, or the legal officer present at a meeting if necessary.

The Committee is pleased with the support and training provided to Members on the Code of Conduct and believes that it helps contribute to the high

ethical governance standards demonstrated by Members of the Council. It is hoped that Members and Co-opted Members will attend refresher sessions during the next Municipal Year and the Committee will continue to monitor training on the Code of Conduct to ensure that high standards continue.

## **5. Member Induction, Training and Development Programme**

The Committee received a report at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015 which outlined the training programme following the 2014 London Local Government Elections. The report provided an overview of training sessions provided including their content and attendance. The training programme aimed to deliver relevant training via a variety of delivery methods for both newly elected and experienced returning Members.

The training programme contained both mandatory and optional activities for Members and was designed to ensure that Members were equipped with the necessary skills and information with which to perform their roles and to ensure high ethical governance standards. The programme provided over 20 'in house' training sessions for Members between the May 2014 elections and February 2015. Most sessions were open to all Members whilst some sessions focussed on the needs of Members on specific Committees. For example, there was specific training provided on Licensing and Planning as Members of both these Committees are required to complete relevant mandatory training on quasi-judicial decision making prior to attending their first meeting. More general sessions were provided to give an overview of the Council directorates.

The Committee was pleased to note that feedback had been sought on all training sessions and that the response from Members had been positive, with sessions generally rated good to excellent.

In response to a request from Standards Committee, the Council has now also developed a range of e-learning courses for Members. This provides a flexible and convenient way for Members to develop their learning and knowledge on specific subject areas. The Committee welcomes this development which enables Members to access a range of courses from any computer in their own time and recognises the fact that Members have a large number of commitments. It also has the advantage that Members can also complete e-learning courses at their own individual pace and can supplement their learning.

The following e-learning modules have now been rolled out for Members:

- Equality Act 2010
- How the Council Works – Decision Making in Hackney
- Member and Officer Relationships
- Members Casework
- Members Code of Conduct
- Outside Bodies



- Standards and Member Complaints

The Committee was also informed of the proposed training programme for 2015/16 which would include sessions on public health, community safety, the voluntary sector, tours of town centres, housing estates and schools as well as aggression awareness. At the Committee's recommendation, training will also be provided to Members on equality and disability awareness. The Committee will continue to monitor training for Members as part of its 2015/16 work programme and will review feedback on the training and the e-learning modules.

## **6. Review of Register of Declaration of Interests Forms**

The Localism Act 2011 and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 requires all Members and voting co-optees to complete and return a declaration of interests form. The Council's declaration of interests form incorporates legislative requirements that Members declare their own pecuniary interests, as well as any pecuniary interests of their spouse or civil partner, or anyone living with them as if they were their spouse/civil partner. The Council also took the view, on recommendation of the Standards Committee, that Members should continue to declare any bodies and organisations of which they are members and any gifts or hospitality received in their role as a Member, and that non-voting co-optees should also complete and return a form.

The Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services, who is also the Council's Monitoring Officer, is responsible under the Localism Act 2011 for establishing and maintaining a Register of Members and co-opted members interests and for ensuring that the Register is published on the Council's website. As part of this duty, the Monitoring Officer routinely monitors and reviews the declaration of interest forms completed by Members and co-optees in order to ensure they have been completed correctly.

To assist Members and Co-optees, Council guidance on completing declaration of interest forms was issued in July 2013. Following the mayoral and local elections on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2014, all newly elected members were required to submit a declarations of interests form and all those re-elected were invited to check their form and submit a revised form if required. Letters were provided to all Members reminding them of the ongoing requirement to update their forms with 28 days of any change in their circumstances.

The Committee received a report at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015 and was pleased to note that the Mayor, all 57 Councillors and all co-optees of the Council had completed their forms within the required timeframe and that many Members regularly updated their forms as their circumstances changed.

It was noted that some forms, although largely accurate, had omitted to declare membership on outside bodies or had declared the names of their spouse/partner when such details were not required. Although these issues

were not substantial, the Monitoring Officer wrote to all Members concerned in December 2014 asking them to amend their forms.

At the recommendation of the Committee, Members and co-optees were also reminded to check and update their forms when they were written to asking them to complete a 3<sup>rd</sup> Parties' Transaction Form.

The Committee will continue to monitor Members and co-optees compliance in completing declaration of interests forms over the 2015/16 Municipal Year, but is encouraged by the fact that forms have been returned and are frequently updated.

## **7. Complaints about Member Conduct**

The standard of conduct by Members and co-optees of the Council has been consistently high and the Committee is particularly pleased that no complaints against Members were received during the 2014/15 Municipal Year.

Jonathan Stopes-Roe continues to serve as the Council's Independent Person on ethical governance matters and to support the Monitoring Officer and the Standards Committee in determining any complaints received against Members and co-optees.

## **8. Guidance for Members on Use of ICT – 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Report**

The Committee received a report at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015. The Committee noted that there had been one breach of the Guidance for Members on Use of ICT during 2014/15 with one laptop lost on public transport. This matter was investigated by the information security team who believed that there was no personal data held on the laptop.

The Committee was also briefed on a forthcoming review of ICT software and equipment for Members, which was being undertaken to ensure that Members are equipped with the necessary tools to perform their duties. Following the outcome and implementation of findings from the review, it may be necessary to update the guidance for Members on Use of ICT.

## **9. Conclusion**

The Standards Committee has now been in operation for three years following its establishment by Council. The Committee remains dedicated to maintaining high ethical standards in Hackney and supporting Members and co-optees in doing so. The Committee is pleased to see that the current framework is operating successfully and the Committee believes that Council Members and co-optees continue to demonstrate high ethical standards.

The Committee's ongoing focus will be to support Members to ensure that they are fully aware of the principles of the Code of Conduct and to monitor attendance at training and completion of Register of Interests' forms.

I thank the 5 co-optees of the Committee for their assistance and hard work on the Committee and the Independent Person, Mr Jonathan Stopes-Roe, for his contribution to our work. In particular, I would like to thank Elizabeth Coates-Thummel, who resigned from the Committee at the end of the 2014/15 Municipal Year, for her help and support since joining the Council as a co-optee in 2008.

The Committee thanks the Monitoring Officer and the Governance Services Officer for their assistance in the year.

**Councillor Sophie Linden**  
**Chair of Standards Committee**

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<p><b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2015-16</b></p>
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<p><b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b></p>	<p><b>CLASSIFICATION:</b></p>
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<p>15<sup>th</sup> JULY 2015</p>	<p>Open</p>
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<p><b>WARD(S) AFFECTED</b></p>
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<p>All Wards</p>
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<p><b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR</b></p>
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<p>Gifty Edila, Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services</p>
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## **1. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In line with established good practice, the Standards Committee sets out a work programme to help it focus its attention on promoting and maintaining high ethical standards among Members of the Council.
- 1.2 This report outlines the areas of work which the Committee will be undertaking to ensure that it maintains effective oversight of Member conduct and ensures that high ethical governance standards are maintained.
- 1.3 The report therefore invites the Committee to agree a work programme for the year 2015-16.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **Standards Committee is asked to agree the draft work programme for 2015-16 as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.**

## **3. REASON FOR DECISION**

- 3.1 Issues concerning ethical governance including the promotion and maintenance of high ethical standards among Members of the Council are within the remit of the Committee. Agreement of the Committee's work programme would therefore enhance the work of the Committee.

## **4. COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

- 4.1 This report seeks agreement for the work programme of the Standards Committee and does not have financial implications.

## **5. COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, HR AND REGULATORY SERVICES**

- 5.1 The work programme enables the Council to discharge its legal obligation under the Localism Act 2011, to promote and maintain high standards in public office.

## **6. BACKGROUND**

- 6.1 The Localism Act 2011 places an obligation on the Council to ensure that high ethical standards are promoted and maintained among its Members. At the Council meeting on 28 March 2012, the Council appointed the Standards Committee to assist with promoting and maintaining high ethical standards in the Council.
- 6.2 The suggested work programme, attached at Appendix 1, is intended to help the Committee to focus attention on its responsibilities and duties, with particular attention on ensuring all Members receive appropriate training, complete their register of interests forms and continue to uphold high ethical

governance standards. There is some flexibility to add items to the work programme subject to time and resources.

- 6.3 Complaints received in the year may necessitate additional meetings being held by a Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee.

**Gifty Edila**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Legal, HR and Regulatory Services**

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1 –Standards Committee Work Programme 2015-16**

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

No documents which require listing been relied upon in the preparation of this report.

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**STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16**

<b>MEETING DATE</b>	<b>ITEM</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
15/07/2015	<b>Standards Committee Terms of Reference</b>	Noting	The Committee will be asked to note its terms of reference.	LHR&RS (Robert Walker)
	<b>Standards Committee Annual Report 2014/15</b>	Decision	The report will provide Members with an annual review of the Committee's work for comment and commendation to Council. It will also update Members on proposed areas of work for the future.	LHR&RS (Robert Walker)
	<b>Draft Work Programme</b>	Decision	The report will ask Members to agree the priorities for and work of the Committee for 2015/16.	LHR&RS (Robert Walker)
21/01/2016 Page 27	<b>Review of the Register of Members' and Co-optees' Declaration of Interests</b>	Information	The report informs the Committee on Members and Co-optees completion of their declaration of interests forms.	LHR&RS (Gifty Edila)
	<b>Review of Member Training or guidance provided</b>	Information	The Committee will consider a report on training provided to Members especially with focus on ethical governance matters. The report will include an overview of the training and e-learning training provided, information on attendance and feedback received from Members. The Committee will be asked to provide comments and suggestions on any further training needs.	LHR&RS (Gifty Edila)
	<b>Annual Report on Compliance with Guidance on Members' Use of ICT</b>	Information	The report will update the Committee on compliance with the guidance on their use of ICT by Members, and highlight any areas for improvement if necessary.	F & R (Christine Peacock)

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