



# STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Thursday, 21st July, 2016

at 6.30 pm

Room 103, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street,  
London E8 1EA

**Committee Membership:**

**Councillor Katie Hanson, Councillor Ben Hayhurst,  
Councillor Clayeon McKenzie, Councillor Sally Mulready,  
Councillor Clare Potter and Councillor Jessica Webb (Vice-  
Chair)**

**Co-optees:**

**Julia Bennett, George Gross, Adedoja Labinjo and Onagete  
Louison**

**Tim Shields  
Chief Executive**

**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

Date of next meeting – 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017

# AGENDA

## Thursday, 21st July, 2016

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

| Item No | Title  | Page No       |
|---------|--|---------------|
| 1       | Apologies for absence  |               |
| 2       | Declarations of interest   |               |
| 3       | Minutes of previous meetings                                     |               |
| a       | <u>Minutes of the meeting held 21 January 2016</u>               | (Pages 1 - 4) |
| b       | <u>Minutes of the urgent meeting held on 27 January 2016</u>     | (Pages 5 - 6) |
| c       | <u>Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 25 May 2016</u>  | (Pages 7 - 8) |
| 4       | <b>Standards Committee Terms of Reference</b>                    | 9 - 10        |
|         | The Standards Committee is asked to note its terms of reference. |               |
| 5       | <b>Standards Committee Draft Annual Report 2015/16</b>           | 11 - 20       |
| 6       | <b>Standards Committee Draft Work Programme 2016/17</b>          | 21 - 26       |
| 7       | Any other business   |               |

## 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.

# 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:

- i. 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;
- ii. 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
- iii. 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:

- i. 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).
- ii. 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.
- iii. 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 Yinka Owa, Director of Legal, on 020 8356 6231 or email [Yinka.Owa@Hackney.gov.uk](mailto:Yinka.Owa@Hackney.gov.uk)

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## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 21ST JANUARY, 2016

- Councillors Present:** Councillor Sophie Linden in the Chair  
Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Sally Mulready and  
Cllr Clare Potter
- Co-optees Present:** Julia Bennett, George Gross and Adedoja Labinjo
- Apologies:** Onagete Louison
- Officers in Attendance:** Yinka Owa (Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services), 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 As listed above.

### 2 Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

### 3 Minutes of the previous meeting - 15 July 2015

- 3.1 **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015 be approved as a true and accurate record.

- 3.2 Under matters arising, the Chair advised that:

- item 5, the Standards Committee Annual Report 2014/15 had been considered at the Full Council meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015; and
- paragraph 7.11, following comments from the Standards Committee, guidance had been issued in November 2015 for Members on counter-signing forms for members of the public.

### 4 Guidance for Members on the Use of ICT - 5th Annual Report

- 4.1 Chris Peacock, Assistant Director of ICT, introduced the 5<sup>th</sup> annual report on Guidance for Members on the use of ICT. Chris Peacock stated she was pleased to advise that there had been no breaches of the guidance during the 2015/16 municipal year and that, since the Guidance had been issued in 2011, there had only been two breaches and that neither of these resulted in a data breach.

- 4.2 Chris Peacock explained to the Committee that, as detailed in paragraph 7 of the report, a review was still underway of the ICT equipment provided to Members. A small pilot group of Members were currently testing different laptops and tablets, and equipment in party groups' rooms had been updated.
- 4.3 Chris Peacock also updated the Committee that Members were now required to use a two-factor authentication method to access the Council's webmail externally in order to comply with security standards to connect to the Government's Public Service Network. A drop-in session to demonstrate the new log in process had been held prior to the Full Council meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015.
- 4.4 Following a question from Councillor Hayhurst, Chris Peacock explained that it was anticipated that the pilot of new equipment for Members would be completed and a new offer of equipment would be put to Members by the end of the financial year. The Chair explained that she and Cllr Munn, the lead Member for the review of ICT, would invite all Members to a meeting to discuss proposals once finalised.
- 4.5 **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

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

- 5.1 Yinka Owa, Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services, introduced the report to the Committee on the annual review of the Register of Members' and Co-optees' declaration of interest forms. Yinka Owa explained that the review had revealed that all Members and Co-optees had completed and returned a register of interests form and that the majority of Members frequently updated their forms.
- 5.2 The Standards Committee noted that the review had however, identified that a small number of Members had not updated their forms since 2012. These Members had been written to and asked to review their forms and check them for accuracy.
- 5.3 **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **6 Update on Members Training and Development Programme**

- 6.1 Yinka Owa, Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services, introduced the report on the Members' Training and Development Programme.
- 6.2 Yinka Owa advised that a survey of the Programme had been undertaken in February 2015 to assess Members' training needs following the induction programme provided after the local elections in May 2014. Paragraph 1.5 of the report listed those areas which Members indicated that they were interested in receiving further training.
- 6.3 The Committee noted that the Programme for 2015/16 included 11 in-house training sessions as well some external training courses on specialised subjects



requested by Members. Generally training sessions were open to all Members of the Council unless they were sessions focussed on specific functions, such as training for Members of the Licensing Committee and Planning Sub-Committee. In addition, Yinka Owa explained that Members had been offered a range of e-learning courses and advised that Members were kept informed of training sessions through the weekly Members' newsletter.

- 6.4 Julia Bennett commented that the Programme seemed to be very comprehensive and well received by Members.
- 6.5 Councillor Mulready explained that she believed, as previously raised at Committee meetings, that training and support should be put in place for Members who may become ill or disabled whilst in office. She queried whether training could also be provided on disability awareness and safety awareness. With regard to the issue of safety awareness, Councillor Mulready believed this to be an important issue given that Members could occasionally be confronted by angry members of the public at ward surgeries etc and believed that risk assessments should be carried out.
- 6.6 The Chair noted Councillor Mulready's comments and asked officers to respond on these points prior to the next meeting of the Standards Committee. The Chair explained that Members had previously been invited to attend officer training on aggression and safety awareness however, she believed it may be necessary to hold further sessions for Members.
- 6.7 Councillor Webb explained that she had attended the aggression and safety awareness course and she believed it should form part of any future Members' induction training programme. She also believed that disability awareness training should be viewed as a core course for Members.
- 6.8 Yinka Owa noted Members observations and agreed to provide feedback to the Committee prior to its next meeting.
- 6.9 **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **7 Any other business**

- 7.1 The Committee discussed recent Sub-Committee meetings and the role and engagement of the Independent Person. The Committee agreed that this should be a standard item at future meetings to allow discussion and the monitoring of processes for considering complaints with the Independent Person.

**Duration of the meeting:** 6.30 - 7.00 pm

**Contact:**

Robert Walker, Governance Services

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## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 27TH JANUARY, 2016

- Councillors Present:** Councillor Sophie Linden in the Chair  
Cllr Sally Mulready and Cllr Jessica Webb (Vice-Chair)
- Co optees Present:** George Gross
- Apologies:** Councillor Ben Hayhurst and Councillor Clare Potter
- Officers in Attendance:** Yinka Owa (Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services) and Robert Walker (Governance Services Officer)

### 1 Apologies for absence

- 1.1 As listed above.

### 2 Declarations of Interests

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

### 3 Report of Corporate Director of Legal, HR and Regulatory Services: Request for Dispensation for all Members of Full Council

- 3.1 Yinka Owa, Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services, introduced the report. She explained that Full Council was due to meet later the same evening and hear a motion on the Government's Housing and Planning Bill 2015, for which the proposals of the Bill were set out in paragraph 1.3 of the report.
- 3.2 Yinka Owa stated that the Bill had the potential to affect Members who are tenants of the Council, or housing association or private sector tenants, or private sector landlords, or those who work for a private sector landlord or housing association. Consequently, Members with such interests may be deemed to have a pecuniary interest under the Members' Code of Conduct and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 and would be required to declare the interest and leave the meeting during consideration of the motion.
- 3.3 Yinka Owa explained that the Standards Committee had been called to consider whether dispensation should be granted on one or both of the following statutory grounds:

- i) That granting dispensation was in the interests of residents; and/or

- ii) That it is otherwise appropriate to grant dispensation for some other reason.
- 3.4 George Gross noted that a large number of Members may be affected if dispensation was not granted and he expressed his view that it was logical to grant dispensation to allow Members to participate in the motion. He believed it was relevant that Full Council would only be debating a Government Bill and that Members would only be expressing their views.
- 3.5 Following discussion by the Committee of whether or not dispensation should be granted and, if dispensation was to be granted, the extent of Members involvement who may have any interest, it was **RESOLVED** that:

All Members of Full Council be granted dispensation to participate in the debate and vote on the motion on the Housing and Planning Bill at the Full Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

Ground and reasons for the decision

That it was otherwise appropriate for some other reason to grant dispensation.

The Standards Committee noted that Members who are tenants of the Council, or housing association or private sector tenants, or private sector landlords, or work for a private sector landlord or housing association, may all be affected by the Housing and Planning Bill and may be deemed to have a pecuniary interest.

The Committee believed that if dispensation was not granted so great a number of Members would be unable to participate that it would impair the debate on the motion.

Further

The Standards Committee stipulates that any Member who speaks during the motion should declare any pecuniary or other interest that they may have at the time that they rise to speak.

#### **4 Any other business**

- 4.1 None.

**Duration of the meeting:** 6.00 - 6.30 pm

**Contact:**

Robert Walker, Governance Services



## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EXTRAORDINARY STANDARDS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 25TH MAY, 2016

**Councillors Present:** Councillor Sophie Linden in the Chair  
Cllr Katie Hanson, 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 2016/17 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 2016/17 Municipal Year.

Councillor Clare Potter proposed that Councillor Jessica Webb be elected to serve as Vice Chair of the Standards Committee for the 2016/17 Municipal Year. This was duly seconded by Councillor Sally Mulready.

There were no other nominations.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Jessica Webb be elected to serve as Chair of the Standards Committee for the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

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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 2015/16**

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**21 July 2016**

**COUNCIL**

**30 November 2016**

**CLASSIFICATION:**

**Open**

**WARD(S) AFFECTED**

**All Wards**

**Tim Shields, Chief Executive**

## **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 2015/16, as attached at Appendix 1, and endorse it for submission to Full Council.**
- 2.2 **That Full Council notes the Standards Committee's Annual Report for 2015/16, as attached at Appendix 1.**

## **3. RELATED DECISIONS**

- 3.1 This is the fourth 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, 22 October 2014 and 25 November 2015.

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

- 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 DIRECTOR, LEGAL**

- 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 fourth 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 2015/16 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;
  - Monitoring the Members Induction, Training and Development Programme;
  - Review of the Register of Interests;
  - Consideration of complaints made under the Members' Code of Conduct;
  - Consideration of a report on the Guidance for Members on Use of ICT; and
  - Consideration of requests for dispensation.

**Tim Shields**  
**Chief Executive**

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Standards Committee Annual Report 2015/16

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Report Author</b>   | Yinka Owa, Director, Legal<br>020 8356 6234<br><a href="mailto:Yinka.Owa@Hackney.gov.uk">Yinka.Owa@Hackney.gov.uk</a>                             |
| <b>Comments of the Group Director, Finance and Corporate Resources</b> | Jackie Moylan<br>Assistant Director of Finance<br>0208 356 3032<br><a href="mailto:Jackie.Moylan@hackney.gov.uk">Jackie.Moylan@hackney.gov.uk</a> |
| <b>Comments of the Director, Legal</b>                                 | Yinka Owa, Director, Legal<br>020 8356 6234<br><a href="mailto:Yinka.Owa@Hackney.gov.uk">Yinka.Owa@Hackney.gov.uk</a>                             |

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**

**1. Introduction from Councillor Sophie Linden, Chair of the Committee for 2015/16 and Cabinet Member for ethical governance matters**

This report provides an overview of the Committee's work in the 2015/16 Municipal Year, in what was the Committee's fourth 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 2015/16 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.

It is again regrettable that the opposition parties have decided again not to take up their place on the Standards Committee for the 2016/17 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.

I also thank on behalf of the Committee Gifty Edila, who acted as Monitoring Officer and Corporate Director up until her retirement in February 2016 after 27 years of working in local government.

**2. Membership**

For 2015/16, membership of the Committee was as follows:

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

Cllrs Linden and Webb were elected as chair and vice-chair of the Committee, respectively, for 2015/16 at the extraordinary meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

The table below outlines Members' and co-optees' attendance at meetings of the Standards Committee meetings during the 2015/16 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 the Committee meetings during 2015/16.

| <b>Member</b>                  | <b>Meeting date</b>   |          |          |                          |
|--------------------------------|---|----------|----------|--------------------------|
|                                | 20/05/15 Extraordinary meeting to appoint chair and vice chair* | 15/07/15 | 21/01/16 | 27/01/16 Urgent meeting* |
| Cllr Sophie Linden (Chair)     | P   | P        | P        | P                        |
| Cllr Jessica Webb (Vice Chair) | P   | P        | P        | P                        |
| Cllr Ben Hayhurst              | P   | P        | P        | A                        |
| Cllr Sally Mulready            | P   | P        | P        | P                        |
| Cllr Clare Potter              | P   | P        | P        | A                        |
| Julia Bennett                  | N   | P        | P        | N                        |
| George Gross                   | N   | P        | P        | P                        |
| Adedoja Labinjo                | N   | A        | P        | N                        |
| Onagete Louison                | N   | P        | A        | N                        |

Key:

P = Present

A = Apologies for absence

N = Not required to attend

\*Co-opted Members were not expected to attend the extraordinary meeting and urgent meeting.

Further to the above, two Standards Assessment Sub-Committee meetings were called during the 2015/16 Municipal Year. Only two elected Members and one co-optee sit on Sub-Committee meetings. Cllr Hayhurst, Cllr Potter

and George Gross attended a Sub-Committee meeting which sat on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2015, and Cllr Mulready, Cllr Webb and Julia Bennett attended a Sub-Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

### **3. Terms of reference 2015/16**

The Standards Committee operated within the following terms of reference for 2015/16 Municipal Year, which were noted at the Committee's meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015 –

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. 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 was pleased to see that during the 2014/15 Municipal Year there was high attendance at training sessions on the Code provided by the Monitoring Officer. During 2014/15, 20 out of the 21 new councillors elected during the 2014 local elections had attended training on the Code. Following consideration of last year's report, the Chair of the Committee wrote to the one Member who had not attended training encouraging them to attend a

future session. The Committee is pleased to note that this Member attended a one-to-one session during 2015/16 Municipal Year and that all newly elected Members in 2014 have now completed training on the Code.

Further, following by-elections in May 2016, two new Members were elected to the Council. Both of these two new Members were provided with training on the Members' Code of Conduct in May 2016 after their election to office.

The Monitoring Officer provided to Members updated guidance on declaring interests. Following feedback provided by the Standards Committee, the guidance was updated to clarify to Members that they should declare any income received from renting out the whole or part of any property as a pecuniary interest. This revised guidance was circulated to all Members in March 2016.

The Monitoring Officer also circulated a legal update to all Members of the Council updating them on a criminal conviction of an elected councillor at another local authority who failed to declare a pecuniary interest at a meeting. The Committee was also briefed on this matter at its first ordinary meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

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 and Co-optees of the Council. It is hoped that Members and Co-opted Members will attend refresher sessions during the next Municipal Year. 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 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016 which outlined the training programme for 2015/16. The report provided an overview of training sessions offered to Members and an outline of their content.

The training programme contained both mandatory and optional activities for Members and was designed to build on the comprehensive induction programme provided following local elections in 2014. The programme for 2014/15 provided over 20 in house training sessions for Members following the 2014 local elections and 9 in house sessions were provided during 2015/16. 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 Planning as Members of this Sub-Committee are required to complete relevant mandatory training on quasi-judicial decision making prior to attending their first meeting.

In addition, external training courses were offered to Members on the Government's Prevent Strategy, public speaking and how to be an effective councillor.

The Committee also received an overview of e-learning courses, which can be completed by Members remotely at times convenient to them. This provides a flexible and convenient way for Members to develop their learning and knowledge on specific subject areas.

The Committee welcomed the comprehensive training programme provided to Members during 2015/16 and was pleased to note that it received positive feedback from those who attended.

The Committee also made recommendations on future training sessions for Members as part of the 2016/17 training programme. The Committee believed that training should be provided to Members on disability awareness as well as specific training focussing on the issue of Members becoming disabled whilst serving as a Member. Further, the Committee requested that Members receive training on safety awareness and suggested that Members' be offered risk assessments in relation to ward surgeries.

## **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 or 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 Council's Monitoring Officer, now the Director of Legal, 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 and an updated version was circulated to all Members in March 2016.

The Committee received a report at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016 and was pleased to note that the Mayor, all 57 Councillors and 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.



The Standards Committee noted that the review had however, identified that a small number of Members had not updated their forms since 2012. These Members had been written to and asked to review their forms and check them for accuracy.

Two new Councillors were elected at by-elections in May 2016. Both Councillors completed and returned forms within the required 28 day period following their election to office.

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.

Three complaints were received under the Members' Code of Conduct by the Council's Monitoring Officer. Two of these complaints were referred to the Standards Assessment Sub-Committee and no further action was recommended in relation to both of these complaints. A third complaint was resolved through local resolution by the Council's Monitoring Officer and was therefore not required to be submitted to the Standards Committee.

Jonathan Stopes-Roe continues to serve as the Council's Independent Person on ethical governance matters and has supported the Monitoring Officer and the Standards Committee during 2015/16 in determining any complaints received against Members and co-optees.

### **8. Guidance for Members on Use of ICT – 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Report**

The Committee received a report at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016 on the Guidance for Members on Use of ICT. The Committee noted that there had been no breach of the guidance during the 2015/16 Municipal Year and that, since the Guidance had been issued in 2011, there had only been two breaches and that neither of these resulted in a data breach.

The Committee was also briefed on the ongoing 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. Dispensation Requests**

Under the Council's Dispensation Procedure, the Standards Committee is responsible for considering requests for dispensations on the grounds that it is in the interests of residents or that it is otherwise appropriate to grant dispensation for some other reason.

At the Committee's meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2015 the Committee approved a request to renew dispensation for two Councillors to participate in the work developing the Dalston SPA as part of the Council's Licensing Policy Review on the ground that it was otherwise appropriate to do so.

An urgent meeting of the Standards Committee was called on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 to consider whether to grant dispensation to Members of the Council to speak on a motion at Full Council.

The motion concerned the draft Housing and Planning Bill, still being processed through Parliament at that time. The Standards Committee noted that Members who were tenants of the Council, or housing association or private sector tenants, or private sector landlords, or worked for a private sector landlord or housing association, may all be affected by the Bill and may have been deemed to have a pecuniary interest.

There are only five grounds that dispensation may be granted, as set out in paragraph 14.2 of the Members' Code of Conduct. The Committee decided to grant Members dispensation to participate in the debate and vote on the motion on the Housing and Planning Bill at the Full Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 under ground (e), that it was otherwise appropriate for some other reason to grant dispensation.

The Committee believed that if dispensation was not granted so great a number of Members would be unable to participate that it would impair the debate on the motion.

The Standards Committee further stipulated however, that any Member who spoke during the motion should declare any pecuniary or other interest that they may have had.

## **10. Conclusion**

The Standards Committee has now been in operation for four 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 four 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.

**Councillor Sophie Linden**  
**Chair of Standards Committee 2015/16**



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| <b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17</b> |
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| <b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b> | <b>CLASSIFICATION:</b> |
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| 21 <sup>st</sup> JULY 2016 | Open |
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| <b>WARD(S) AFFECTED</b> |
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| All Wards |
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| Tim Shields, Chief Executive |
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## **1. 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 2016/17.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **Standards Committee is asked to agree the draft work programme for 2016/17 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 GROUP DIRECTOR, FINANCE AND CORPORATE 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 DIRECTOR, LEGAL**

- 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.

**Tim Shields**  
**Chief Executive**

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1 –Standards Committee Work Programme 2016/17**

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

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|--|---|
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**STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17**

| <b>MEETING DATE</b>   | <b>ITEM</b>   | <b>ACTION</b> | <b>PURPOSE</b>   | <b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>           |
|-----------------------|---|---------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 21/07/2016            | <b>Standards Committee Terms of Reference</b>                                     | Noting        | The Committee will be asked to note its terms of reference.  | Monitoring Officer              |
|                       | <b>Standards Committee Annual Report 2015/16</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.   | Monitoring Officer              |
|                       | <b>Draft Work Programme</b>   | Decision      | The report will ask Members to agree the priorities for and work of the Committee for 2016/17.   | Monitoring Officer              |
| 12/01/2017<br>Page 25 | <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.   | Monitoring Officer              |
|                       | <b>Review of the Members' Training and Development Programme</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. | Monitoring Officer              |
|                       | <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.   | Finance and Corporate Resources |

The Standards Committee and Standards Sub-Committees may meet as and when required to consider complaints made under the Members' Code of Conduct.

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