



STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 15 February 2023 at 6.30 pm
Council Chamber, Hackney Town Hall,
London E8 1EA

The live stream can be viewed here:

<https://youtu.be/WDI8XXiluY>

Back up link: <https://youtu.be/TE8GGUwpecA>

Members of the Committee:

Cllr Frank Baffour, Cllr Anntoinette Bramble (Chair and Deputy Mayor),
Cllr Polly Billington, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Humaira Garasia (Speaker),
Cllr Anna Lynch, Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Lynne Troughton (Vice
Chair), Vacancy (Conservative)

Feryal Ertan – Independent Person to Standards Committee

Nicola Harris – Co-opted Member

Aoife Scannell – Co-opted Member

4 Vacancies

Mark Carroll
Chief Executive
7 February 2022
www.hackney.gov.uk

Contact: Natalie Kokayi
Governance Officer
governance@hackney.gov.uk

**Standards Committee
Wednesday, 15 February 2023
Agenda**

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members are invited to consider the guidance which accompanies this agenda and make declarations as appropriate.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting : Enclosed (Pages 7 - 12)

Members to consider the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 July 2022

4 Dispensation - London Energy Limited : Enclosed (Pages 13 - 16)

5 Mandatory Training Update : Enclosed (Pages 17 - 22)

6 Any Other Business the Chair Considers to be Urgent

Public Attendance

Following the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions by the Government and the Council updating its assessment of access to its buildings, the Town Hall is now open to the public and members of the public may attend meetings of the Council.

We recognise, however, that you may find it more convenient to observe the meeting via the live-stream facility, the link for which appears on the agenda front sheet.

We would ask that if you have either tested positive for Covid-19 or have any symptoms that you do not attend the meeting, but rather use the livestream facility. If this applies and you are attending the meeting to ask a question, make a deputation or present a petition then you may contact the Officer named at the beginning of the Agenda and they will be able to make arrangements for the Chair of the meeting to ask the question, make the deputation or present the petition on your behalf.

The Council will continue to ensure that access to our meetings is in line with any Covid-19 restrictions that may be in force from time to time and also in line with public health advice. The latest general advice can be found here - <https://hackney.gov.uk/coronavirus-support>

Rights of Press and Public to Report on Meetings

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 give the public the right to film, record audio, take photographs, and use social media and the internet at meetings to report on any meetings that are open to the public.

By attending a public meeting of the Council, Executive, any committee or sub-committee, any Panel or Commission, or any Board you are agreeing to these guidelines as a whole and in particular the stipulations listed below:

- Anyone planning to record meetings of the Council and its public meetings through any audio, visual or written methods they find appropriate can do so providing they do not disturb the conduct of the meeting;
- You are welcome to attend a public meeting to report proceedings, either in 'real time' or after conclusion of the meeting, on a blog, social networking site, news forum or other online media;
- You may use a laptop, tablet device, smartphone or portable camera to record a written or audio transcript of proceedings during the meeting;
- Facilities within the Town Hall and Council Chamber are limited and recording equipment must be of a reasonable size and nature to be easily accommodated.
- You are asked to contact the Officer whose name appears at the beginning of this Agenda if you have any large or complex recording equipment to see whether this can be accommodated within the existing facilities;
- You must not interrupt proceedings and digital equipment must be set to 'silent' mode;
- You should focus any recording equipment on 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 to respect the wishes of those who do not want to be filmed and photographed may result in the Chair instructing you to cease reporting or recording and you may potentially be excluded from the meeting if you fail to comply;

- Any person whose behaviour threatens to disrupt orderly conduct will be asked to leave;
- Be aware that libellous comments against the council, individual Councillors or officers could result in legal action being taken against you;
- The recorded images must not be edited in a way in which there is a clear aim to distort the truth or misrepresent those taking part in the proceedings;
- Personal attacks of any kind or offensive comments that target or disparage any ethnic, racial, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability status could also result in legal action being taken against you.

Failure to comply with the above requirements may result in the support and assistance of the Council in the recording of proceedings being withdrawn. The Council regards violation of any of the points above as a risk to the orderly conduct of a meeting. The Council therefore reserves the right to exclude any person from the current meeting and refuse entry to any further council meetings, where a breach of these requirements occurs. The Chair of the meeting will ensure that the meeting runs in an effective manner and has the power to ensure that the meeting is not disturbed through the use of flash photography, intrusive camera equipment or the person recording the meeting moving around the room.

Advice to Members on Declaring Interests

If you require advice on declarations of interests, this can be obtained from:

- The Monitoring Officer;
- The Deputy Monitoring Officer; or
- The legal adviser to the meeting.

It is recommended that any advice be sought in advance of, rather than at, the meeting.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)

You will have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (*DPI) if it:

- Relates to your employment, sponsorship, contracts as well as wider financial interests and assets including land, property, licenses and corporate tenancies.
- Relates to an interest which you have registered in that part of the Register of Interests form relating to DPIs as being an interest of you, your spouse or civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse or civil partner.
- Relates to an interest which should be registered in that part of the Register of Interests form relating to DPIs, but you have not yet done so.

If you are present at any meeting of the Council and you have a DPI relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you **must**:

- Not seek to improperly influence decision-making on that matter;
- Make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of the DPI at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent; and
- Leave the room whilst the matter is under consideration

You **must not**:

- Participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business; or
- Participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

If you have obtained a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee prior to the matter being considered, then you should make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of the DPI and that you have obtained a dispensation. The dispensation granted will explain the extent to which you are able to participate.

Other Registrable Interests

You will have an 'Other Registrable Interest' (ORI) in a matter if it

- Relates to appointments made by the authority to any outside bodies, membership of: charities, trade unions,, lobbying or campaign groups, voluntary organisations in the borough or governorships at any educational institution within the borough.
- Relates to an interest which you have registered in that part of the Register of Interests form relating to ORIs as being an interest of you, your spouse or civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse or civil partner; or
- Relates to an interest which should be registered in that part of the Register of Interests form relating to ORIs, but you have not yet done so.

Where a matter arises at any meeting of the Council which affects a body or organisation you have named in that part of the Register of Interests Form relating to ORIs, **you must** make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of the DPI at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. **You may** speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

Disclosure of Other Interests

Where a matter arises at any meeting of the Council which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you **must** disclose the interest. **You may** speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

Where a matter arises at any meeting of the Council which **affects** your financial interest or well-being, or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate to a greater extent than it affects the financial interest or wellbeing of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest, you **must** declare the interest. You **may** only speak on the matter if members of the public are able to speak. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or voting on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

In all cases, where the Monitoring Officer has agreed that the interest in question is a **sensitive interest**, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest itself.



Standards Committee
Tuesday, 12 July 2022

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 12 JULY 2022 AT 6:30PM

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HACKNEY TOWN HALL

THIS MEETING WAS LIVE STREAMED AND CAN BE VIEWED HERE:

https://youtu.be/16EhmsDtW_U

Councillors Present:	Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble in the Chair Cllr Anna Lynch, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren and Cllr Lynne Troughton
Co-optees Present	Nicola Harris and Aoife Scannell
Independent Person:	Feryal Ertan
Officers in Attendance:	Dawn Carter-McDonald (Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services) Peter Gray (Governance Officer) Louise Humphreys (Head of Legal and Governance) Rob Miller (Strategic Director, Customer Services and Workplace)

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Cllr Frank Baffour.

2. Declarations of Interest - Members to declare as appropriate

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 16 February 2022

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 February 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

4. Standards Committee Terms of Reference and Work Programme for 2022 /2023

- 4.1 The Chair introduced the item and confirmed that there had been no changes to the terms of reference.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report be noted;
2. That the work programme for 2022/2023 as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report be approved.

5. Members Use of ICT - 11th Annual Report

- 5.1 The Chair introduced the report, thanking staff for the work carried out during the pandemic to ensure that meetings of the Council could continue to be held. The Chair noted that Hackney Council was one of the first Councils to hold online meetings, ensuring that residents could participate in meetings, or view them via a livestream. The Chair confirmed that meetings would continue to be delivered both in person and virtually, in compliance with the law, alongside live streaming.
- 5.2 The Strategic Director of Customer Services and Workplace highlighted the following:
- That there had been no breaches in relation to Members use of IT over the past calendar year;
 - Work was ongoing with the Council's Member Services Section to refresh Member Data Protection training;
 - The IT equipment offer to Members remained the same;
 - Since the cyber attack the Council's committee papers system (Mod.Gov) had been recovered with all files now available online;
 - There had been further improvements to virtual meetings with less intrusive equipment now installed in meeting rooms;
 - Further work was necessary on costings to enhance the 'hybrid' committee meeting equipment;
 - A further 158 Council meetings had been held over the past year;
 - Due to the decision to move to Cloud-based Services, Council Members' access to communication tools had not been interrupted by the cyber attack.
- 5.3 The Chair asked for a timescale for the work to enhance hybrid committee meetings. She asked for progress on recovery from the cyber attack, stressing the continued impact on residents and the importance of communicating with the Community on progress as this matter continued to be a challenge.
- 5.4 In reply, the Strategic Director of Customer Services and Workplace advised that:

- There were no timescales for work around hybrid meetings at present. Detailed survey work had been completed, providing the necessary information for planning;
- A detailed update on the cyber attack was being prepared for all members;
- There was continued communication with residents in regard to progress on recovery following the cyber attack;
- The backlog of new benefits claims and changes of circumstances was now largely cleared. Further work was required in more complex cases;
- It was anticipated that the Benefits Service would operate as normal by the end of the calendar year. The service was currently operating on longer processing times;
- The Land Searches Team had successfully addressed the backlog in land searches, working well with mortgage lenders to ensure that transactions could go forward with indemnities;
- Significant progress had been made on housing repairs;
- There was a focus on the needs of residents and a determination in the teams concerned to address difficulties.

5.5 Councillor Troughton asked whether there was indemnity covering personal liability for fines in circumstances where there was a breach of the Data Protection Act. The Director of Customer Services and Workplace agreed to consult Member Services on this matter.

Action: The Strategic Director of Customer Services and Workplace

5.6 Councillor Etti asked for details of upcoming 'online data awareness' training. The Strategic Director, Customer Services and Workplace reported that returning members had undertaken training in this area in the past two years. He agreed to update members on the dates of forthcoming training.

Action: The Strategic Director of Customer Services and Workplace

5.7 Nicola Harris asked if members' conduct in the use of digital tools was included in training provided.

5.8 The Head of Legal and Governance confirmed that the use of digital tools did form part of mandatory Code of Conduct training provided to members following the introduction of the new Code after the local elections. The training had centred on how the requirements of the Code interacted with the use of social media.

5.9 Councillor Lynch and the Chair referred to the excellent training provided to Members on the Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the update on Members' use of ICT, Data Protection training and the provision of ICT equipment for Members.

2. To note the continued use of virtual committee meetings and live streaming, and the steps being taken to support hybrid committee meetings.
3. To note the update on the impacts of the cyber attack on Members' use of ICT.

6. Standards Committee Annual Report 2021/2022

- 6.1 The Chair congratulated the Legal and Governance Team on winning the Recruiting Diverse Talent award at the UK Diversity Legal Awards 2021.
- 6.2 The Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services introduced the report, highlighting the following:
 - The importance of good standards in public life;
 - The work undertaken by the committee during the year, including work carried out by the Task and Finish Group on the introduction of the new Councillor Code of Conduct;
 - The declarations of interest form and the form relating to the declaration of gifts and hospitality had both been reviewed and were now more easily accessible and transparent;
 - To thank the Independent Person, Feryal Ertan, for her work and advice on complaints received in 2021/22. 14 complaints had been received. 1 complaint had been withdrawn with another complaint not pursued because of a lack of information provided. None of the complaints met the threshold for investigation.
- 6.3 Nicola Harris asked whether any themes emerged from the complaints received.
- 6.4 The Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services reported that those trends that emerged centred on posts on social media and that this was a focal point for member training with an emphasis on how these could be viewed by the wider public.
- 6.5 The Chair thanked all concerned for their continued work in this area and to Councillor Lynch for volunteering on the Working Group. The Chair told the Committee that she was Deputy Chair of the Local Government Association Board but had no role in forming the principles and guidance in the Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Report for 2021/2022 be endorsed and submitted to Full Council.

7. Any Other Business that the Chair Considers Urgent

- 7.1 There was no urgent business.

End of meeting

Duration of the meeting: 6:30pm – 7:00pm
Chair: Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble

Contact:
Peter Gray
Governance Officer
peter.gray@hackney.gov.uk

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Title of Report	Dispensation - London Energy Limited
For Consideration By	Standards Committee
Meeting Date	February 2023
Classification	Open
<u>Ward(s) Affected</u>	N/A
<u>Director</u>	Director of Legal, Democratic & Electoral Services and Monitoring Officer

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1. This report concerns a proposed dispensation for Councillor Mete Coban on the basis of his appointment to the board of London Energy Limited.

2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1. That a dispensation be granted to Councillor Mete Coban in respect of his appointment to the board of London Energy Limited under section 33 Localism Act 2011, such dispensation to last until the earliest of the following (a) Councillor Coban ceasing to be an elected member of Hackney Council, or (b) Councillor Coban's appointment to LEL coming to an end.

3. **Background**

North London Waste Authority

- 3.1. North London Waste Authority ("NLWA") is the statutory joint waste disposal authority for north London and as such is responsible for the disposal of waste collected by seven north London boroughs (the constituent boroughs):
 - The London Borough of Barnet
 - The London Borough of Camden
 - The London Borough of Enfield

- The London Borough of Hackney
- The London Borough of Haringey
- The London Borough of Islington
- The London Borough of Waltham Forest

3.2. NLWA is established as a statutory joint waste disposal authority under Schedule 1 to the Waste Regulation and Disposal (Authorities) Order 1985. The Authority's main waste disposal functions are set out in section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The Authority has a membership of 14 councillors, with each constituent borough appointing two councillors. The London Borough of Hackney appointments are a function of the executive and made by the Mayor, as set out in the Constitution. Substitute members are not permitted (i.e. another Councillor may not attend meetings as an NLWA member if the appointed member is absent).

LondonEnergy Limited

3.3. NLWA is the sole shareholder in LondonEnergy Ltd ("LEL"). This is a company which operates an energy from waste facility and other waste facilities at the Edmonton EcoPark in Enfield, and waste transfer stations and reuse and recycling centres in the north London area. NLWA has a waste services contract with LEL for disposal of the waste delivered by the constituent boroughs.

3.4. Councillor Coban has been appointed to the board of LEL. The appointment carries with it remuneration in the sum of £14,483 per annum.

3.5. As the appointment is a paid appointment, a disclosable pecuniary interest would arise whenever the Council is discussing matters relating to the activities of LEL. This would require Councillor Coban to make the existence of the disclosable pecuniary interest known to the meeting and then not participate in the discussion or voting thereon.

Dispensations

3.6. It is open to the Council to grant a dispensation in respect of a disclosable pecuniary interest under section 33 Localism Act 2011.

3.7. A dispensation may be granted if:

- (a) the number of persons prohibited from participating in the meeting would be so great a proportion as to impede the transaction of the business
- (b) without the dispensation the balance of political groups on the committee would be affected and affect the outcome of any voting
- (c) granting dispensation is in the interests of residents

- (d) each member of the executive would be prohibited from participating in any particular business to be transacted by the executive
 - (e) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.
- 3.8. In respect of cases falling within (c) and (e) above, only the Standards Committee may grant such a dispensation, in all other cases it is a matter for the Monitoring Officer to determine.
- 3.9. The Council has previously granted dispensations to other elected members who have been appointed to the board of LEL on the grounds of it being in the interests of residents within the borough. There is no reason why this approach should not be continued in the case of Councillor Coban.
- 3.10. Dispensations have previously been granted until either the relevant Councillor ceases to be an elected Member of the Council or ceasing to be an appointment to the board of LEL. Again it is recommended that this approach be maintained.

4. **Comments of the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.**

- 4.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The costs associated with LondonEnergy Ltd are borne by the company, and have no substantial implications for the finances of the Council.

5. **Comments of the Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services**

- 5.1. The legal implications relevant to the determination of whether a dispensation ought to be granted and arising from the recommendations are discussed within the main body of the report.

Appendices

None

Background documents

None

Report Author	Louise Humphreys Head of Legal and Governance louise.humphreys@hackney.gov.uk Tel 020 8356 4817
Comments for the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources prepared by	Deirdre Worrell Director Climate Homes and Economy and Chief Executive's Directorate deirdre.worrell@hackney.gov.uk Tel 020 8356 7350
Comments for the Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services prepared by	Louise Humphreys Head of Legal and Governance louise.humphreys@hackney.gov.uk Tel 020 8356 4817



Title of Report	Mandatory Training Update
For Consideration By	Standards Committee
Meeting Date	February 2023
Classification	Open
<u>Ward(s) Affected</u>	N/A
<u>Director</u>	Director of Legal, Democratic & Electoral Services and Monitoring Officer

1. **Introduction**

1.1. The purpose of this report is to:

- 1.1.1. Advise the Standards Committee of the outcome of a review undertaken by the Monitoring Officer with regards to the mandatory training introduced by the Councillor Code of Conduct adopted at Full Council in January 2022, which became effective following the elections in May 2022.
- 1.1.2. Advise the Standards Committee of proposed changes to the mandatory training that the Monitoring Officer intends to make.

2. **Recommendations**

2.1. **That the Standards Committee note the changes which the Monitoring Officer intends to make to section 11 of the Code of Conduct as regards to mandatory training.**

3. **Background**

- 3.1. Members of the Standard Committee will recall that the revised Councillor Code of Conduct, which became effective following the elections in May 2022, introduced an element of mandatory training for Members.
- 3.2. The relevant section, section 11, of the Code of Conduct is reproduced below for ease of reference.

11. Training

As a Councillor:

11.1 I attend any training that may be prescribed by the Monitoring Officer as being essential to my role.

In order to ensure that Councillors are properly equipped to carry out their role and are knowledgeable about the obligations that are placed upon the Council in respect of certain functions and decision-making processes, it has been determined that the following training should be mandatory either for all Councillors or for a limited class of Councillors as follows:

- *Safeguarding children and corporate parenting - all Councillors - annually*
- *Safeguarding adults - all Councillors - annually*
- *Equalities, Diversity and Inclusivity - all Councillors - annually*
- *Bullying, harassment and sexual harassment - all Councillors - annually*
- *Data Protection and Freedom of Information / Environmental Information Regulations - all Councillors - annually*
- *Councillors' Code of Conduct - all Councillors - annually*
- *Local government finance & budget setting - all Councillors - annually*
- *Dealing with the media / social media - all Councillors - annually*
- *Town and Country Planning - members of the Planning Sub-Committee - annually*
- *Licensing - members of the Licensing Committee and its Sub-Committees - annually*
- *Recruitment and Selection - members of the Appointments Committee and its Sub-Committees - upon first appointment to the Appointments Committee*

The Monitoring Officer may from time to time review and amend the list of mandatory training and update this Code accordingly and advise Members of any changes.

- 3.3. As it is now approaching a year since the new Code of Conduct came into effect, the Monitoring Officer has conducted a review of how the mandatory training element is operating in practice. Training for elected Members is organised via Members' Services.
- 3.4. Member Services has asked all elected members to complete a Google Form indicating which elements of the mandatory training they have undertaken. The form was initially circulated on 29 July 2022, and a reminder was sent out on 23 September 2022. It is understood that the Group Whips have also sent a further two reminders. To date 18 forms have been returned (a return rate of 31%).

Training	Method of delivery	Number of elected members who are required to undertake the training (including any substitutes)	Percentage of relevant elected members <i>(see paragraphs 3.5 - 3.8 below for an explanation as to how these figures have been derived)</i>
Safeguarding children and corporate parenting	Virtual	58	15.3%
Safeguarding adults	Virtual	58	16.9%
Councillors' Code of Conduct	In person	58	100%
Local government finance & budget setting	Virtual	58	8.5%
Town and Country Planning	Virtual	16	100%
Licensing	In person & virtual	14 ¹	92.8%
Recruitment and Selection		2 ²	0

¹ Although the Committee membership is 15, there is 1 vacancy on the Committee because the Conservative Group have not taken up their seat.

³ The Appointments Committee has five members, of whom two are new appointments in 2022/2023 and therefore required to undertake the training. Of those two new appointments, one was only appointed in January 2023. In addition, the Appointments Committee has not been required to sit since the Code of Conduct became effective.

- 3.5. With regards to the percentage figure for the Safeguarding children & corporate parenting; safeguarding adults; and local government finance and budget training, these have been derived from the self-certification forms returned to Member Services. It is therefore possible that the actual number of members who have completed the training may be higher - whether through attendance at the session itself or subsequent viewing of the recorded training. However, at this stage Officers do not have any confirmatory evidence.
- 3.6. With regards to the Code of Conduct training, this was conducted in person and upon completion of that training members were asked to sign declarations confirming their adherence to the Code which were countersigned by the Monitoring Officer.
- 3.7. The percentage figure for the Planning Sub-Committee has been derived from:
 - 3.7.1. The self-certification forms returned to Member Services;
 - 3.7.2. Records maintained by the Head of Planning and Building Control
- 3.8. The percentage figure for the Licensing Committee has been derived from:
 - 3.8.1. The self-certification forms returned to Member Services;
 - 3.8.2. The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 31 May 2022 as a training session was held at the conclusion of the meeting; and
 - 3.8.3. Records maintained by the Governance Service and the Legal Officer who advises the Licensing Committee.

Three members of the Licensing Committee are in the final stages of their training and this should be completed by the end of February; therefore these members have been included in the percentage calculation. For completeness until such time as the training has been completed those members have not and will not sit on Licensing Sub-Committees.
- 3.9. With regards to mandatory training for Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion; Bullying, harassment & sexual harassment; Data Protection, Freedom of Information & Environmental Information Regulations; and Dealing with the media / social media, it has not yet been possible for this training to be offered due to the extremely limited number of dates which are available within the Council's annual calendar.

- 3.10. Members have not provided any direct feedback as regards the mandatory training elements. However, comments have been received about the calendar being very busy.

Amendments to training mandated by the Monitoring Officer

- 3.11. Given the constraints that exist with the Council calendar, it is considered that a change is required to the training for Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion; Bullying, harassment & sexual harassment; Data Protection, Freedom of Information & Environmental Information Regulations; and Dealing with the media / social media so that the requirement is biennial rather than annual. This is not intended to detract from the importance of such training, but is a practical and pragmatic step if we are to avoid elected members falling into breach of the Code inadvertently.
- 3.12. Upon further reflection, it is considered that training in respect of local government finance and budget setting should be mandated for all members following their election to the Council (whether at the quadrennial elections or any intervening by-elections) with updates being provided through an appropriate delivery mechanism as and when required by the s151 Officer, for example if amendments are made to the Council's Budget and Policy Framework which relate to the budget or if there are any significant s151 reports / audit reports issued in respect of any local authority. The rationale for this is that main legislative provisions governing local government finance are not often amended. However, from the perspective of good governance it is important that Members understand the principles of local government finance and that training is offered when changes are effected or if there are lessons to be learned from the experiences of other local authorities.
- 3.13. An amendment is also proposed, for clarification, as regards the Appointments Committee to make clear that training is required to be undertaken upon a member being first appointed to the Committee prior to that member attending a meeting of the Committee, or its Sub-Committees.
- 3.14. I therefore propose to make amendments to section 11 of the Councillor Code of Conduct accordingly.

4. **Comments of the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.**

- 4.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Any costs that arise from the need for all Councillors to undertake mandatory training are met from existing budgets.

5. **Comments of the Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services**

- 5.1. Under section 27 Localism Act 2011, the Council has a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of

the Council and must adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity.

- 5.2. Section 28 of the Localism Act requires that the Code is, when viewed as a whole, consistent with the seven principles of public life and must include provisions as regards the disclosure of pecuniary interests and interests other than pecuniary interests. However, save for these overarching requirements, there are no statutory requirements or limitations as to the content of the Code. Section 28 also provides that the Council may revise its Code of Conduct or replace it.
- 5.3. The Monitoring Officer has been authorised, via the adoption of the Code in January 2022, to make changes to the requirements as regards mandatory training. This report is therefore presented to the Standards Committee for noting purposes rather than decision.

Appendices

None

Background documents

None

Report Authors	<p>Louise Humphreys Head of Legal and Governance louise.humphreys@hackney.gov.uk Tel 020 8356 4817</p> <p>Bruce Devile Head of Business Intelligence, Elections & Member Services bruce.devile@hackney.gov.uk Tel 020 8356 3418</p>
Comments for the Group Director of Finance and Corporate Resources prepared by	<p>Deirdre Worrell Director Climate Homes and Economy and Chief Executive's Directorate Finance deirdre.worrell@hackney.gov.uk Tel 020 8356 7350</p>
Comments for the Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services prepared by	<p>Louise Humphreys Head of Legal and Governance louise.humphreys@hackney.gov.uk Tel 020 8356 4817</p>