

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 11 JULY 2023

THE LIVESTREAM CAN BE VIEWED HERE:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ODgNz0bnQc>

Councillors Present:	Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble in the Chair Cllr Anna Lynch, Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren
Independent Person:	Feryal Ertan
Joining Remotely:	Cllr Frank Baffour, Cllr Sade Etti, Cllr Humaira Garasia, Cllr Sem Moema
Apologies:	Councillor Sade Etti, Councillor Lynne Troughton and Councillor Sem Moema
Officers in Attendance:	Louise Humphreys (Head of Legal and Governance), Natalie Kokayi (Governance Officer), Tessa Mitchell (Governance Team Leader)

The Chair welcomed all members of the Committee and officers to the meeting.

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lynne Troughton, Nicola Hanns, Aoife Scannell, and apologies from Cllr Sade Etti, attending virtually, for lateness.

2 Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The following matters arising were noted:

ACTION: To request Member Services capture and maintain a record of attendees to all mandatory training where possible and to confirm that all members are sent the links to recordings after training has taken place.

Response: All sessions are delivered virtually and recordings are placed on the Members intranet.

ACTION: To request Member Services email members to highlight the importance of completing self-certification forms following attendance at training.

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Response: Members have been sent Google forms a number of times to self certify attending training and records of forms that are submitted are maintained by Member Services

ACTION: To consider ways of using ICT to support members to self certificate their attendance at training.

Response: As above.

3.2 The Chair noted that there was no query regarding Members attendance at training, however, the key issue was to ensure that attendance had been recorded in a systematic way.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 February 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

4 Terms of Reference and Work Programme of Standards Committee

4.1 The report was introduced by the Head of Legal and Governance who noted the terms of reference for the municipal year. It was noted that the Council is undertaking a review of its Constitution, including how the various terms of reference for each committee were proposed to be presented in future and a forward look of the suggested Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee was set out at Appendix 3. The revised Constitution is to be presented at Full Council for consideration at its meeting on 24 July 2023.

4.2 The suggested work programme was set out to help the committee focus 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.

RESOLVED:

That the Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee as detailed in Appendix 1 be noted.

That the Work Programme for 2023/2024 as detailed in appendix 2 be approved.

5 Annual Report

5.1. The report was introduced by the Head of Legal and Governance. Every year the Committee presents its Annual Report. The report provided an overview of the work and activities of the Standards Committee during the last municipal year, 2022-2023, and provided information on complaints received alleging breaches of the Councillor Code of Conduct.

5.2 All complaints received had been from members of the public and the most common cause of complaint related to not receiving a response to resident enquiries, complaints of requests for assistance. These complaints had become greater in number than complaints received regarding social media. It was noted that time taken to respond to emails was different to breaches of the code of conduct.

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- 5.3 It was noted that residents may not be aware who their ward councillors are and may have sent emails to a number of councillors. Members noted that councillors needed an integrated system of recording casework and the progress in responding, including correspondence with residents, to such inquiries. The Chair indicated that the comments from the Committee had been noted to feedback to Cllr Chapman, who is leading on the casework review.
- 5.4 It was suggested that a consistent approach to out of office messages be established to help manage resident expectations. In addition, it was noted that residents may not always get the response they want from their inquiry.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Report for 2022/2023 be endorsed and submitted to Full Council.

6 Any Other Business the Chair Considers to be Urgent

- 6.1 Clarification was sought to ensure that names of Councillors attending remotely were captured in the minutes of the meeting and if known at the time of publication also included in the agenda for the Committee.

END OF MEETING

Duration of the meeting: 18:34-19:00

Chair: Deputy Mayor Anntoinette Bramble

Contact: Natalie Kokayi

Governance Officer

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