

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE
HELD ON
TUESDAY, 13th JULY 2021**

THIS MEETING WAS LIVE STREAMED AND CAN BE VIEWED HERE:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_JMpfBWXHuM

Chair:	Deputy Mayor Bramble in the Chair
Councillors in Attendance:	Cllr Kofo David (Vice Chair); Cllr Anna Lynch; Cllr Sem Moema; Cllr Carole Williams; Cllr Caroline Woodley
Independent Person in Attendance:	Feryal Ertan
Co-opted Members in Attendance:	Aoife Scannell
Apologies:	Cllr Humaira Garasia; Cllr Katie Hanson; Nicola Hanns
Officers in Attendance:	Dawn Carter-McDonald, Director of Legal and Governance Services Bruce Deville, Head of Business Intelligence, Elections and Member Services Louise Humphreys, Head of Legal and Governance Services Rob Miller, Strategic Director Customer and Workplace Andrew Spragg, Governance Services Team Leader

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Garasia, Cllr Hanson and Nicola Hanns. The Chair welcomed Cllr David as a new member of the Committee and the Vice-Chair, and Feryal Ertan as the Council's newly appointed Independent Person.

2. Declarations of Interest - Members to declare as appropriate

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2021 be agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. Standards Committee Terms of Reference and Draft Work Programme 2021/22

4.1 The Governance Services Team Leader introduced the report and asked Councillors to note the proposed forward plan. Terms of reference would be developed for the Assessment Sub-Committee and Hearing Sub-Committee as part of the ongoing review of the Council's Constitution. There were no further comments.

RESOLVED:

- i) to note the terms of reference for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 1.**
- ii) to agree the draft work programme for 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.**

5. Members Use of ICT - 10th Annual Report

5.1 The Strategic Director Customer and Workplace introduced the report, and highlighted several areas of ongoing work with Councillors in respect to ICT. The Committee discussed the plans to roll out a mobile app to ensure Councillors had access to the Council's telephony service. It was confirmed that this was in the final stages of procurement and it was expected that it would be provided to Councillors in the summer.

5.2 The Committee was informed that the report only covered Councillors' use of Council-provided ICT equipment.

RESOLVED:

- i) to note the update on Members' use of ICT, Data Protection training and provision of ICT equipment for Members**
- ii) to note the continued use of virtual committee meetings and live streaming, and the steps being taken to support hybrid committee meetings**
- iii) to note the update re: impacts of the cyberattack on Members' use of ICT**

6. Standards Committee Annual Report 20/21

- 6.1 The Director of Legal and Governance Services set out the report, and advised the Committee that it would be referred to Full Council in October 2021. It was confirmed that the dispensations referenced in the report did not include those given by Full Council in respect to Councillors' attendance at meetings, but referred only to dispensations that were in the power of the Standards Committee to grant.

RESOLVED:

- i) **To endorse its annual report, attached as appendix 1, prior to submission to Full Council.**

7. Councillor Training 2020/21

- 7.1 The Head of Business Intelligence, Elections and Member Services introduced the report. The Committee queried whether safeguarding training could be made mandatory, and expressed concern that Councillors were not supported to understand what should be considered priority training for their role. The Head of Legal and Governance Services advised that the question of mandatory training was something that was under consideration as part of the work towards the adoption of a new Code of Conduct. Although the Local Government Association's Model Code of Conduct did not specifically reference training beyond that for the Code itself, a section was proposed to be added to the Code which referenced a requirement for Councillors to attend any training that the Monitoring Officer deemed essential to their role as a Councillor. It was confirmed that the Standards Committee would have an opportunity to review the list of proposed mandatory training and make recommendations for additional training courses to be included. The Chair commented that it would be a good opportunity to reaffirm the standards and expectations for all Councillors.

RESOLVED:

- i) **To note the report**

8. To note the appointment of the Independent Person to Standards Committee for a four year period

- 8.1 The Director of Legal and Governance Services advised the Committee that Feryal Ertan had been appointed as the Independent Person by Full Council on 30 June 2021, and that her induction into the role had begun. The Chair and Committee welcomed Feryal.

9. To note progress in respect the appointment of the Co-opted Members to Standards Committee

- 9.1 The Head of Legal and Governance Services informed the Committee that the recruitment process for Co-opted Members had been unsuccessful, and the intention was to re-advertise in September 2021.

10. Update on proposed adoption of a new Member Code of Conduct

10.1 The Head of Legal and Governance Services informed the Committee that the Local Government Association (LGA) had published additional guidance for its Model Code of Conduct. This was being reviewed by officers, and it was hoped that the Task and Finish Group could reconvene in the summer or early September 2021. It was noted that some additional guidance for Monitoring Officers was pending in respect to dealing with code of conduct complaints, and it was hoped this could be considered alongside the other LGA documents.

11. Update on Code of Conduct complaints

11.1 The Director of Legal and Governance Services confirmed that two complaints had been received since the start of the municipal year. The retirement of the previous Independent Person had meant these had not progressed to the threshold assessment stage, but the intention was to undertake a provisional assessment with the new Independent Person in the coming weeks. The Director of Legal and Governance Services highlighted that all complaints were taken seriously and given due consideration, and it was important to follow the process in order to ensure that complainants were treated equitably.

12. Dates of Future Meetings - 16 February 2022

12.1 The Committee noted its next meeting in February 2022.

End of Meeting

Duration of the meeting: 18:30 - 19:20

Contact:

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