

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS (ADVISORY) COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7.35 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 28 JULY 2016

**COMMITTEE ROOM 1, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5
CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON E14 2BG**

Members Present:

John Pulford MBE
Nafisa Adam
Mike Houston
Councillor Ayas Miah
Councillor Candida Ronald
Councillor Chris Chapman

Observers:

None present. –

Apologies:

Daniel McLaughlin (Co-optee)
Councillor Sabina Akhtar (Member)
Councillor Marc Francis (Member)
Councillor Ohid Ahmed (Member)
Councillor Muhammad Ansar Mustaqim (Member)

Officers Present:

Graham White – (Interim Service Head, Legal Services, Law, Probity and Governance)
Antonella Burgio – (Democratic Services)

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

Co-optee Nafisa Adam nominated and Councillor Candida Ronald seconded that Co-optee John Pulford be appointed Chair of Standards (Advisory) Committee for the duration of the municipal year. There being no other nominations, it was

RESOLVED

That Co-optee John Pulford be appointed Chair of Standards (Advisory) Committee for the duration of the municipal year.

JOHN PULFORD IN THE CHAIR

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

Councillor Candida Ronald nominated and Co-optee Mike Houston seconded that Co-optee Nafisa Adam be appointed Vice-Chair of Standards (Advisory) Committee for the duration of the municipal year. There being no other nominations, it was

RESOLVED

That Co-optee Nafisa Adam be appointed Vice-Chair of Standards (Advisory) Committee for the duration of the municipal year.

3. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2016 be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

5. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

5.1 Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership, Dates of Meetings and Establishment of Sub-Committees

The clerk introduced the report which informed members of the powers and framework of the Committee as set out in the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED

1. That the Terms of Reference, Membership, Quorum, Dates of future meetings and timing thereof, as set out in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 to this report be noted.

2. That the following sub-committees be established for the municipal year 2016/17, to be convened as required on an ad hoc basis with membership agreed by the Monitoring Officer from amongst the members of the Standards(Advisory) Committee (SAC), including in each case a minimum of three members:-
 - Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee
 - Hearing Sub-Committee
 - Dispensations Sub-Committee

5.2 Covert investigation under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

The Interim Service Head, Legal Services, introduced the report which provided an update on covert surveillance activity undertaken by the Council under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) in the previous three quarterly periods.

The following were noted:

- The Councils policies on the use of forms of covert surveillance were approved in 2012 and have now been reviewed. These will be submitted for approval by Cabinet in autumn 2016.
- One application in each quarter, Q3 2015/16 and Q4 2015/16 were made by the Council under this legislation to investigate illegal tobacco sale and fraudulent social housing claim respectively. No applications were made in Q1 2016/17.
- Following a change to the initial regulations relating to RIPA, applications for surveillance under these powers must be authorised by a magistrate.
- Fireworks regulations require that category 2 and 3 fireworks can only be purchased by an adult and therefore the powers under RIPA may be applied if necessary.

RESOLVED

That information provided on the use of covert surveillance powers and the comments of the Committee be noted

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Concerning Minute 3.3 of the meeting held on March 2016 (Timesheets), the Chair enquired whether Governance Review Working Group (GRWG) had indicated a timescale for responding to the referral of this matter to the Group. Members were advised that the referral had been noted but no timescales had been advised since GRWG had reviewed its Forward Plan and determined that matters relating to the fulfilment of Secretary of State's Directions and completion of the Best Value Action Plan arising from this should be the focus of the work plan at this time. The Committee noted the response and discussed the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining a timesheet requirement for Elected Members.

RESOLVED

That the discussion be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.

John Pulford Chair,
Standards (Advisory) Committee

