

Standards Advisory Committee



Wednesday, 26 June 2024 at 6.30 p.m.

Committee Room - Tower Hamlets Town Hall, 160

Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ

Agenda

Members

John Pulford MBE, Fiona Browne, Mike Houston, Elizabeth Marshall MBE, Faham Sinan-Katamba, Councillor Abu Chowdhury, Councillor Iqbal Hossain, Councillor Asma Islam, Councillor Sirajul Islam and Councillor Harun Miah

Observers (Independent Persons):

Rachael Tiffen (Independent Person) and Amanda Orchard ((Independent Person))

Substitutes:

Councillor Sabina Akhtar and Councillor Marc Francis

[The quorum for Standards Advisory Committee is 3 Members including one Councillor and one Co-optee]

Further Information

Reports for consideration, meeting contact details, public participation and more information is available on the following pages.



Public Information

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Contact for further enquiries:

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Town Hall, 160 Whitechapel Road, London, E1 1BJ

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Standards Advisory Committee

Wednesday, 26 June 2024

6.30 p.m.

PAGE
NUMBER(S)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

7 - 8

Members are reminded to consider the categories of interest in the Code of Conduct for Members to determine whether they have an interest in any agenda item and any action they should take. For further details, please see the attached note from the Monitoring Officer.

Members are reminded to declare the nature of the interest and the agenda item it relates to. Please note that ultimately it's the Members' responsibility to declare any interests and to update their register of interest form as required by the Code.

If in doubt as to the nature of your interest, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting by contacting the Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services

2. TO ELECT A CHAIR FOR 2024-25

To elect a Chair of the Advisory Committee from amongst the Co-opted Members for the 2024-25 municipal year.

3. TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIR FOR 2024-25

To elect a Vice-Chair of the Committee from amongst the Co-opted Members for the 2024-25 municipal year.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

9 - 14

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Advisory Committee held on 17 December 2023.



5. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

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5.9	Member Attendance Update 2023-24	113 - 128

6. WORK PLAN 129 - 136

To review the Advisory Committee's work plan for the 2024-25 year.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

To consider any other unrestricted business that the Chair considers to be urgent.

8. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

In view of the contents of the remaining items on the agenda the Committee is recommended to adopt the following motion:

"That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the Section Two business on the grounds that it contains information defined as Exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972."

NOTE: EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL SECTION (Pink Papers)

The exempt committee papers in the agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting, please hand them to the Committee Officer present.



9. **ANY OTHER EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

To consider any other exempt/ confidential business that the Chair considers to be urgent.

Next Meeting of the Committee:

Wednesday, 18 September 2024 at 6.30 p.m. to be held in the Committee Room - Tower Hamlets Town Hall, 160 Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BJ



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Agenda Item 1

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AT MEETINGS– NOTE FROM THE MONITORING OFFICER

This note is for guidance only. For further details please consult the Code of Conduct for Members at Part C, Section 31 of the Council's Constitution

(i) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)

You have a DPI in any item of business on the agenda where it relates to the categories listed in **Appendix A** to this guidance. Please note that a DPI includes: (i) Your own relevant interests; (ii) Those of your spouse or civil partner; (iii) A person with whom the Member is living as husband/wife/civil partners. Other individuals, e.g. Children, siblings and flatmates do not need to be considered. Failure to disclose or register a DPI (within 28 days) is a criminal offence.

Members with a DPI, (unless granted a dispensation) must not seek to improperly influence the decision, must declare the nature of the interest and leave the meeting room (including the public gallery) during the consideration and decision on the item – unless exercising their right to address the Committee.

DPI Dispensations and Sensitive Interests. In certain circumstances, Members may make a request to the Monitoring Officer for a dispensation or for an interest to be treated as sensitive.

(ii) Non - DPI Interests that the Council has decided should be registered – (Non - DPIs)

You will have 'Non DPI Interest' in any item on the agenda, where it relates to (i) the offer of gifts or hospitality, (with an estimated value of at least £25) (ii) Council Appointments or nominations to bodies (iii) Membership of any body exercising a function of a public nature, a charitable purpose or aimed at influencing public opinion.

Members must declare the nature of the interest, but may stay in the meeting room and participate in the consideration of the matter and vote on it **unless:**

- A reasonable person would think that your interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair your judgement of the public interest. **If so, you must withdraw and take no part in the consideration or discussion of the matter.**

(iii) Declarations of Interests not included in the Register of Members' Interest.

Occasions may arise where a matter under consideration would, or would be likely to, **affect the wellbeing of you, your family, or close associate(s) more than it would anyone else living in the local area** but which is not required to be included in the Register of Members' Interests. In such matters, Members must consider the information set out in paragraph (ii) above regarding Non DPI - interests and apply the test, set out in this paragraph.

Guidance on Predetermination and Bias

Member's attention is drawn to the guidance on predetermination and bias, particularly the need to consider the merits of the case with an open mind, as set out in the Planning and Licensing Codes of Conduct, (Part C, Section 34 and 35 of the Constitution). For further advice on the possibility of bias or predetermination, you are advised to seek advice prior to the meeting.

Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992 - Declarations which restrict Members in Council Tax arrears, for at least a two months from voting

In such circumstances the member may not vote on any reports and motions with respect to the matter.

Further Advice contact: Linda Walker, Interim Director, Legal and Monitoring Officer, Tel: 0207 364 4348.

APPENDIX A: Definition of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

(Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, Reg 2 and Schedule)

Subject	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vacation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by the Member in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of the Member. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority— (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to the Member's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where— (a) that body (to the Member's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2023

**COMMITTEE ROOM - TOWER HAMLETS TOWN HALL, 160 WHITECHAPEL
ROAD, LONDON E1 1BJ**

Members Present in Person:

Councillor Shafi Ahmed
Councillor Sabina Akhtar
Councillor Sirajul Islam
Councillor Abu Chowdhury

Co-optees Present in Person:

John Pulford MBE (Chair)
Fiona Browne (Vice Chair)
Elizabeth Marshall MBE

Co-optees In Attendance Virtually:

Faham Sinan-Katamba

Apologies:

Councillor Amin Rahman
Rachael Tiffen Independent Person

Officers Present in Person:

Patricia Attawia (Democratic Services Team Leader, Civic & Members, Governance)
Jill Bayley (Head of Legal Safeguarding)
Janet Fasan (Director of Legal & Monitoring Officer)
Matthew Mannion (Head of Democratic Services)
Joel West (Democratic Services Team Leader (Committee))

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

RESOLVED That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2023 be approved as a correct record of proceedings subject to adding the attendance of Faham Sinan-Katamba as an observer and noting apologies of absence from Elizabeth Marshall.

Further to minute 6.1, Janet Fasan, Director Legal and Monitoring Officer explained that work was underway to align Part D of the Constitution with the Code of Conduct for Members (in Part C) to clarify roles of the Monitoring Officer, Independent Persons and sub committees of the Advisory Committee with regards to complaints into breaches of the Code of Conduct.

3. WORK PLAN

The Advisory Committee noted that, whilst all actions listed on the plan had been discharged, it would aim to set target dates for any future actions and asked that these be recorded on the work plan accordingly.

RESOLVED that the work plan is noted.

4. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 Member Learning and Development Yearly Update

This report and the following report (Achieving the Member Learning and Development Charter Mark) were considered together by the Advisory Committee and the combined minute is presented here.

Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services, introduced the report that presented the regular Member Learning and Development Programme report setting out data from 1 January 2023 onwards following on from the last report. Matthew also explained the rationale behind the ambition to achieve the Member Learning and Development Charter Mark.

Further to questions from Advisory Committee on both reports, Matthew explained:

- Clarity on the overall budget for training, development and the Charter Mark would be known when the Council's 2024/25 budget is approved.
- Higher-quality and dedicated training often requires use of external training providers so is necessarily more expensive than in-house provision, an increased budget should allow for external training where it will add value.
- The report on Achieving the Member Learning and Development Charter Mark had been/was planned to be presented to a range of stakeholders such as other Council committees, internal officer groups etc. It was hoped to gather as much feedback as possible.
- Consideration was also being given to a co-optee focussed training and development programme that would identify a role profile for co-optees and relevant training opportunities.

Further to questions, the Advisory Committee made the following comments and observations relating to both reports:

- The Learning and Development Steering Group, which allows elected member involvement in the direction of learning and development activity was welcomed as a useful forum.

- Attendance by members at training may sometimes reflect their seniority and experience. Experienced and long-serving members are less likely to need training in any given year and this will reflect in their attendance statistics.
- Identifying skills and performance development needs can be challenging as some members are reluctant to admit a development need. Creating a safe space for Councillors to reflect on performance would be valuable.
- The Council's political group structures could assist officers creating a training prospectus that is relevant to members needs.
- Training that is different and exciting is more likely to secure good attendance. Interactive training was particularly welcomed.
- Provision of more details on the content of training sessions could help to address low turnouts. Sometimes members are unable to understand what will be included from the title alone.
- Consideration should be given to launching a 'buddy-up' system for new members.
- Training and development plans must recognise and work within the constraints on elected member time if it is to be effective.
- Offers of accredited training may be more attractive as members would be able to demonstrate their qualifications in future if they are not re-elected.

Members noted and endorsed the draft Member Learning and Development Strategy 2023-2026 (appendix 1 to Item 4.2) and indicated they would submit any final comments to officers before it was signed off.

RESOLVED that the Advisory Committee:

1. Notes the report.

4.2 Achieving the LGA Member Learning and Development Charter Mark

This item and the previous item, Member Learning and Development Yearly update, were considered together. For details of the discussion on this item, please see the minute for Item 4.1, Member Learning and Development Yearly update.

RESOLVED that the Advisory Committee:

1. Notes the report.
2. Endorses the proposal to seek Member Learning and Development Accreditation.

4.3 Code of Conduct for Members - Complaint Monitoring and Associated Matters

Jill Bayley, Deputy Monitoring Officer, introduced the report that updated the Advisory Committee on the quarterly monitoring information for complaints and investigations relating to alleged breaches Council's Code of Conduct for Members. Jill summarised the progress of the complaints listed. Jill also explained that two of the complaints had been included in the report for information of members of the Advisory Committee, despite not meeting the criteria for a live complaint, as full reports/forms had yet to be supplied by the complainant.

The Advisory Committee noted that an updated version of Appendix 1 (Complaints and investigation monitoring information) had been published as a supplement to the original agenda.

Further to questions from Advisory Committee, Janet Fasan, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer and Jill explained:

- The current two-month target for complaint completions was often not met and would benefit from review. Most complaints exceeded the target, due in large part to delays waiting for responses from complainants or members.
- Political group leaders are not routinely informed of the details of complaints against members of their group.
- How the views of the Independent Person are taken into consideration by the Monitoring Officer in reaching their decision on action following a complaint.

RESOLVED that the Advisory Committee:

1. Notes the content of the report and the information contained in the updated Appendix 1 to the report.

4.4 Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality Quarterly Update

Patricia Attawia, Democratic Services Team Leader (Civic and Members) introduced the report that updated the Advisory Committee on the Members' Register of Interests and declarations of gifts and hospitality submitted by Members since the previous report to the committee. Patricia explained how she and her team worked to encourage and capture declarations from members. She also asked the Advisory Committee to note there had been an increase in requests to remove certain information (in particular home-addresses) from registers of interest by Members in the previous quarter, following an increase in online abuse.

RESOLVED that the Standards Advisory Committee:

1. Notes the report.

5. DISPENSATIONS UNDER SECTION 33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT 2011

Janet Fasan, Director Legal and Monitoring Officer, introduced the report that informed the Advisory Committee of dispensations in relation to disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI's) under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011. Janet explained that, further to paragraph 3.4, one of the listed specific dispensations had been included in error as it related to the previous year and therefore the total number of such dispensations in this period should read as one (1).

RESOLVED that the Standards Advisory Committee:

1. Notes the update on dispensations as set out in Paragraphs 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 of the report.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was none.

7. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

A resolution to exclude the press and public was not required.


8. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

None.

The meeting ended at 7.18 p.m.

John Pulford, Chair,
Standards Advisory Committee

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Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee 26 June 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Linda Walker, Interim Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Standards Advisory Committee - Terms of Reference	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services
Wards affected	(All Wards);

Executive Summary

This report is presented to the first meeting of each municipal year and sets out, for noting, the Committee’s Terms of Reference, Quorum, Membership and Dates of Meetings for the year.

The report also asks Members to

- approve the establishment of its Sub-Committees to consider complaints relating to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct for Members.
- approve an amendment to the Advisory Committee’s procedure rules.

Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the Advisory Committee’s Terms of Reference (including quorum requirements), Membership, dates/times of meetings and current procedure rules as set out in Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4 to this report.
2. Agree to establish the following sub-committees for the municipal year 2024/25, to be convened as required on an ad-hoc basis with membership drawn from amongst the Members of the Standards Advisory Committee, including in each case a minimum of three members:-
 - Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee
 - Hearings Sub-Committee.
3. Note the proposed amendment to the Advisory Committee’s procedure rules as set out in paragraph 3.16 and recommend this change be progressed via the most appropriate governance route.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The decisions are required to enable Members to be aware of the arrangements of the Committee and to establish its Sub-Committees so that complaints against members can be investigated and where necessary answered.
- 1.2 The proposed amendment to the procedure rules is required to ensure alignment of different parts of the Constitution that cover rules for the investigation of complaints related to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct for Members.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Advisory Committee could choose to propose alternative wording for the procedure rules, to keep the procedure rules as they currently are, or to defer a decision on this matter until a wider review is undertaken on the various provisions for investigations into complaints related to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct for Members.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Standards Advisory Committee has been established by the Council to oversee the Member Code of Conduct, complaints against Members (including investigations and hearings) and other related matters.
- 3.2 The Committee procedure rules set out in Appendix 4 provide a good summary of the work the Committee undertakes.
- 3.3 New Members of the Committee are encouraged to read the committee procedure rules as a good background to the work of the committee.

Annual Establishment, Terms of Reference, Quorum and Dates of Meetings

- 3.4 At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the full Council held on 15 May 2024, the Authority approved the proportionality and establishment of the Committees and Panels of the Authority, including the SAC and appointment of Members thereto.
- 3.5 It is customary that, following the Council AGM, the committees that have been established note their Terms of Reference (TOR), Membership and Quorum for the duration of the Municipal Year. The TORs are set out in Appendix 1 to this report. The membership is set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.6 The dates of SAC meetings for the remainder of the Municipal Year, agreed by the full Council are set out in Appendix 3 to this report.
- 3.7 It should be noted that the 'usual' start time for Standards Advisory Committee (SAC) meetings has been set as 6.30pm. Changes to the permanent agreed

start time for the Committee can be reviewed at the meeting and alternatives suggested by Members should they wish.

Membership

- 3.8 Full Council has agreed that the SAC shall comprise:
- Members of the Council (not including the Mayor or more than one Cabinet Member), appointed by the full Council in accordance with the requirements of political proportionality.
 - Up to five persons who are not Members or officers of the Council or any other relevant authority (i.e. Co-opted members) who will be entitled to vote at meetings.
 - Co-opted members may serve as many terms of appointment as the full Council considers appropriate. A person may not be appointed as a co-opted member of the SAC or one of its sub-committees unless the appointment is approved by full Council.
 - Current co-optees, Mr John Pulford MBE, Mr Michael James Houston, Ms Fiona Browne, Ms Elizabeth Marshall and Faham Sinan-Katamba were previously appointed by Council.

Observers:

- 3.9 With respect to the 'Independent Person' (IP) role introduced nationally under the standards regime resulting from the Localism Act 2011, 2 appointments were made in January 2022. Amanda Orchard was appointed to her first term as Independent Person (expiring 20 January 2026) and Rachael Tiffin was appointed to her second term (also expiring 20 January 2026).
- 3.10 Council has agreed that the IPs should be invited to all SAC meetings in the capacity of observers.

Chairing the Committee

- 3.11 The full Council has agreed that the Chair and the Vice Chair of the SAC will be appointed from the co-opted members of the SAC.

Quorum

- 3.12 The quorum of the SAC and for each of its sub-committees is three of the total membership and this must include at least one Councillor and one Co-opted Member. A Co-opted Member shall Chair the meeting.

Sub-Committees

- 3.13 SAC Sub-Committees are established at the beginning of each municipal year. Their function is to consider allegations and the outcome of investigations into misconduct made against elected and co-opted Members and, where necessary propose sanctions. Following implementation of the Localism Act 2011, the compulsory arrangements for standards committees in England were withdrawn. However, Tower Hamlets Council has chosen to

maintain these arrangements to ensure that robust ethical arrangements for standards in public life are in place.

- 3.14 Sub-Committee membership is drawn from the membership of the parent committee and meetings can be convened as required on an ad hoc basis.
- 3.15 Procedures relating to the Sub-Committees, and the complaints process more generally are set out in the Member Code of Conduct at Part C, Section 31 of the Council's Constitution.

Procedure rules

- 3.16 The Standards Advisory Committee has procedure rules published in the Constitution, Part D. In recent meetings, members have noted that elements of the procedure rules covering investigation of standards complaints appear to be mis-aligned with related provisions in the Code of Conduct for Members (at Part C of the Constitution). To fix this, it is proposed that rule 3.1 of the Procedure Rules is amended as follows. The revised wording reflects the powers of the Monitoring Officer (from the Code of Conduct for Members) to determine the approach to individual complaints, whilst more clearly reflecting their discretion to consult the Standards Advisory Committee (and its Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee) before reaching a decision.

From

~~(a) To recommend to the Monitoring Officer whether or not any complaint of a breach by the Mayor, a Councillor or a co-opted member of the Members Code of Conduct should be referred for investigation by the Monitoring Officer or an investigator appointed by the Monitoring Officer; and where a complaint has been subject to such investigation, to recommend whether or not the complaint should proceed to hearing. Where the Monitoring Officer considers that a complaint should not be subject to investigation or should not proceed to hearing, they shall convene an Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee of the Standards Advisory Committee comprising at least 3 different Members of the Standards Advisory Committee (comprising 2 of the co-opted members and 1 Councillor) which shall make the final decision on the matter;~~

to

If requested by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with their powers conferred in the Council's Code of Conduct for Members (Constitution Section 31 Appendix C):

- (a) To advise the Monitoring Officer whether or not any complaint of a breach by the Mayor, a Councillor or a co-opted member of the Members Code of Conduct should be referred for investigation by the*

Monitoring Officer or an investigator appointed by the Monitoring Officer;

- (b) To advise the Monitoring Officer whether or not any complaint that has been subject to such investigation should proceed to hearing.*

To discharge the duties in (a) or (b), the Monitoring Officer shall convene an Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee of the Standards Advisory Committee, comprising at least 3 Members of the Standards Advisory Committee (comprising 2 of the co-opted members and 1 Councillor);

- 3.17 Whilst reviewing both elements of the Constitution, officers have noted a number of queries that may require updates. It is therefore proposed to bring a wider review of standards complaints procedures to a later meeting of the Committee which could entail amendments to one or both of the Constitution sections .

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None specific to this report.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

- 5.2 In regard to risk management, the terms of reference for the Standards Advisory Committee and the accompanying appendices provides a means of ensuring the work of the Committee and its sub committees is noted.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 Noting of the Terms of Reference, amendments to the procedure rules and establishing Sub Committees do not have any specific financial implications. Reports brought before the Committee under its terms of reference during the year will include comments on the financial implications.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members, and to adopt a code of conduct setting out the conduct expected of members and co-opted members when they are acting in that capacity.
- 7.2 The proposed amendment is to Part D which is not part of the Constitution. The introduction to Part D sets out that that Standards Advisory Committee may make amendments to the Standards Advisory Committee Procedures.
- 7.3 The proposed amendment to Part D complies with the Committee's Terms of Reference set out in Part B of the Constitution.
- 7.4 The proposed matters set out in this report comply with the above legislation and with the Constitution.
-

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Standards Advisory Committee Terms of Reference
- Appendix 2 – Appointments to Committee
- Appendix 3 – Dates of Meetings
- Appendix 4 – Standards Advisory Committee Procedures

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

Standards Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference

Summary Description: The Committee performs a number of functions to maintain high standards of conduct in public life including promoting the Members Code of Conduct and considering potential breaches of the Code of Conduct.

The Committee may establish Sub-Committees to consider certain matters as set out in the ‘Functions’ below.

The Committee and any of its sub-committees may meet in private in accordance with relevant legislation as advised by the Monitoring Officer. Any meeting or part of a meeting that considers whether or not a complaint should be referred for investigation or, following an investigation should proceed to hearing, shall be held in private and all papers relating to that consideration shall remain confidential.

Membership: 5 elected members of the Council (not including the Mayor or more than 1 Cabinet member),

Co-opted Members

Plus up to 5 independent co-opted members.

Co-opted members will be entitled to vote at meetings under the provisions of section 13(4)(e) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Standards Advisory Committee (SAC) shall be chaired by an independent co-opted member.

Independent Co-opted members shall be appointed by full Council on the recommendation of the Monitoring Officer. The term of appointment shall be 4 years unless otherwise determined by Council. Co-opted members may serve as many terms of appointment as the Council considers appropriate.

Note – Independent Persons

The Council has appointed two statutory Independent Persons to assist in dealing with complaints of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct for Members under section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011. They are not co-opted member of the SAC but may attend and observe any meeting of the Committee or a sub-committee established by it.

Functions	Delegation of Functions
<p>Full details are set out in the Committee’s Procedures in Part D of the Constitution, but in summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by the Mayor, councillors and co-opted members of the Council. 2. Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Code of Conduct for Members. 	<p>None</p>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. To monitor and advise the Council about the operation of the Code of Conduct for Members in light of best practice and changes in the law. 4. Advising, training or arranging to train the Mayor, councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to ethics and probity and the Code of Conduct. 5. To appoint sub-committees for the purpose of discharging any of the Committee's functions including the consideration and determination of complaints of breach of the code of Conduct for Members. 6. As requested by the Monitoring Officer, to establish a Dispensations Sub-Committee to advise on any applications for dispensations in relation to participation at a meeting by a member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. 7. To deal with any reports from the Monitoring Officer on any matter relating to standards of conduct. 8. Other functions relating to the standards of conduct of members under any relevant statutory provision or otherwise. 9. Report to the Council on the work of the Committee and any other matters as appropriate 	
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Quorum: A meeting of the Standards Advisory Committee or one of its sub-committees shall only be quorate where at least three members of the Committee or Sub-Committee are present for its duration and such quorum must include at least one councillor and at least one independent co-opted member.

Additional Information:

- Constitution Part A, Section 11 (The Standards Advisory Committee and the Code of Conduct for Members)
- Constitution Part C, Section 31 (The Code of Conduct for Members)
- Constitution Part D, Section 54 (Standards Advisory Committee Procedures)

Appendix 2 – Membership

Co-optees

- John Pulford MBE
- Michael Houston
- Fiona Browne
- Elizabeth Marshall
- Faham Sinan-Katamba

Councillors:

- Councillor Iqbal Hossain
- Councillor Abu Chowdhury
- Councillor Harun Miah
- Councillor Asma Islam
- Councillor Sirajul Islam

Substitutes

- Councillor Sabina Akhtar
- Councillor Marc Francis

Independent Persons

- Amanda Orchard
- Rachael Tiffin

Appendix 3 – Dates of SAC Meetings 2024/25

1. 26 June 2024
2. 18 September 2024
3. 16 January 2025
4. 3 April 2025

Standards Advisory Committee Procedures

1. Composition

1.1 The Standards Advisory Committee shall be comprised of 5 Members of the Council (not including the Mayor or more than 1 Cabinet Member) and each political group may appoint up to 3 substitutes, appointed by the Council in accordance with the requirements of political proportionality; and up to 5 persons who are not Members or officers of the Council or any other relevant authority (i.e. Co-opted members).

1.2 The Co-opted member(s) will be entitled to vote at meetings under the provisions of section 13(4)(e) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Standards Advisory Committee shall be chaired by a Co-opted member.

1.3 The Committee shall establish Hearings and other Sub-Committees in accordance with its terms of reference and these procedures.

2. Appointment of Co-Opted Members

2.1 A person may not be appointed as a Co-opted member of the Standards Advisory Committee or one of its sub-committees unless the appointment is approved by Full Council. The term of appointment shall be for 4 years unless otherwise determined by Council or the Co-optee does not continue to fulfil any required conditions as may be determined by the Authority from time to time. Co-opted members may serve as many terms of appointment as the Council considers appropriate.

3. Roles and Functions

3.1 The Standards Advisory Committee has the following roles:

(a) To recommend to the Monitoring Officer whether or not any complaint of a breach by the Mayor, a Councillor or a co-opted member of the Members Code of Conduct should be referred for investigation by the Monitoring Officer or an investigator appointed by the Monitoring Officer; and where a complaint has been subject to such investigation, to recommend whether or not the complaint should proceed to hearing. Where the Monitoring Officer considers that a complaint should not be subject to investigation or should not proceed to hearing, they shall convene an Investigation and Disciplinary Sub-Committee of the Standards Advisory Committee comprising at least 3 different Members of the Standards Advisory Committee (comprising 2 of the co-opted members and 1 Councillor) which shall make the final decision on the matter;

(b) To receive regular quarterly reports from the Monitoring Officer on the numbers of complaints of the Code received, the decisions taken by the Monitoring Officer (in

consultation with the Independent Person) on such complaints and investigation outcomes where the investigation determines there was no evidence of a failure to comply with the code or where the investigation outcome recommends a local resolution;

(c) To convene a Hearings Sub-Committee of 3 Members of the Standards Advisory Committee comprising 2 of the co-opted members and 1 Councillor to consider any matter where the investigation finds evidence of a failure to comply with the Code and a local resolution is not possible or appropriate;

(d) To make such recommendations to Council in respect of the matter as the Hearings Sub-Committee considers appropriate as a result of any matter referred including;

(i) Reporting its findings to Council for information;

(ii) Recommending to the member's Group Leader (or in the case of ungrouped members, recommend to Council or to Committees) removal from any or all Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council;

(iii) Recommending to the Mayor removal from the Executive, or from particular Portfolio responsibilities;

(iv) Recommending the Monitoring Officer arrange training for the member;

(v) Recommending removal from outside appointments to which they have been appointed or nominated;

(vi) Recommending withdrawing facilities provided to the member by the Council, such as a computer, website and/or email and Internet access;

(vii) Recommending excluding the member from the Council's offices or other premises, with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending Council, Executive Committee and Sub-Committee meetings;

(viii) Recommending the Member to contact the Council via specified point(s) of contact;

(e) To convene a Hearings (Appeal) Sub-Committee of at least three different Members of the Standards Advisory Committee (comprising 2 of the co-opted members and 1 Councillor) to consider any appeal against a finding of, or sanction recommended by, the Hearings Sub-Committee;

(f) To receive reports on compliance with any recommendation(s) made for sanctions to be applied in respect of any member;

(g) Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by the Mayor, Members of the Council, co-opted members including church and parent governor representatives and where the Committee considers that there may be issues of concern recommending that the Monitoring Officer considers and reports on the issues raised;

(h) Assisting the Mayor, Members of the Council, co-opted members including church and other faiths and parent governor representatives to observe the Council's Code of Conduct for Members;

(i) Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Code of Conduct for Members;

(j) Monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct for Members;

(k) Advising, training or arranging to train the Mayor, Members of the Council and co-opted members including church and other faiths and parent governor representatives on matters relating to the Code of Conduct for Members;

(l) To act as an advisory body in respect of any matters referred to the Standards Committee by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) or Community Forums in respect of probity issues arising out of the codes and protocols applicable to relevant members of the LSP and Community Forums as set out in the Community Forum handbook and as may be amended from time to time;

(m) To advise on allegations of Member breaches of the Protocols set out in the constitution as may be referred to the Committee by the Monitoring Officer and to make recommendations with regard to such allegations as maybe so referred;

(n) Advising on local protocols for both Officer and Member governance;

(o) To monitor and review Member and Officer Procedures for registering interests and declaring gifts and hospitality;

(p) To receive periodic reports on the Council's Ethical Governance arrangements, on whistle blowing arrangements and complaints; and

(q) As requested by the Monitoring Officer, to establish a Dispensations Sub-Committee to advise on any applications for dispensations in relation to participation at a meeting by a member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.

4. Validity of proceedings

4.1 A meeting of the Standards Advisory Committee or one of its sub-committees shall only be quorate where at least three members of the Committee or Sub-Committee are present for its duration and such quorum must include at least one councillor and at least one co-opted member.

4.2 Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972 applies in relation to meetings of the Standards Advisory Committee or its Sub-Committees as it applies to meetings of the Council.

5. Hearings Sub-Committee and Hearings (Appeal) Sub-Committee

5.1 Any Hearings Sub-Committee or Hearings (Appeal) Sub-Committee shall comprise a minimum of three Members of the Standards Advisory Committee at least two of whom shall be co-opted members.

5.2 The Hearings Sub-Committee shall consider complaints referred to it that the Mayor, an elected or co-opted Member of the Council may have failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct for Members or local protocol where the complaint has been subject to an investigation arranged by the Monitoring Officer and shall make recommendations accordingly. The Hearings Sub-Committee shall decide at the outset of the meeting whether it is in the public interest that the Hearing is held in a public or private session in accordance with relevant statutory guidance as advised by the Monitoring Officer.

5.3 The membership of the Hearings (Appeal) Sub-Committee shall not include any member who served on the Hearings Sub-Committee that considered the same complaint.

5.4 The Independent Person, or if that person is unable to act a reserve Independent Person, shall have the right to attend all meetings of the Hearings Sub-Committee or Hearings (Appeal) Sub-Committee as an observer but may not vote or participate in the decision making.

6. Attendance Requirements

6.1 In the event that any Member of the Committee does not attend three or more consecutive meetings of the Committee, the Committee may draw the attention of the Council to such non-attendance and may recommend that the member concerned be replaced on the Committee.

6.2 The Committee shall not do so without first giving the absent Member an opportunity to make representations (which may be made in writing) as to their non-attendance and any matters they wish the Committee to take into account.

7. Procedures


7.1 The Committee shall maintain these procedures to enable it to discharge the arrangements under its Terms of Reference.

8. Confidentiality

8.1 The Committee and any of its Sub-Committees may meet in private in accordance with the relevant legislation as advised by the Monitoring Officer. Any meeting or part of a meeting that considers whether or not a complaint should be referred for investigation or, following an investigation should proceed to hearing,

shall be held in private and all papers relating to that consideration shall remain confidential.

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Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee Wednesday 26 June 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Linda Walker, Interim Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Register of Interests and Gifts and Hospitality Quarterly Update	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services Patricia Attawia, Democratic Services Team Leader (Civic and Members)
Wards affected	All Wards

Executive Summary

This report updates the Committee on the Members’ Register of Interests and declarations of gifts and hospitality submitted by Members since the previous report to the Committee on 7 December 2023.

The Standards Advisory Committee is receiving this report as it monitors compliance with the requirement in the Council Code of Conduct for Members to register and disclose their interests, and to declare any offer of a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25.

Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. Review, comment on and note the report
2. Review and endorse the decision to remove all Members’ addresses from the Council website

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council is required by statute to adopt a Code of Conduct for Members. For the purpose of the Code, a Member includes the Mayor, elected Councillors and Co-opted Members of the Authority.
- 1.2 A Member is required under the Council’s Code of Conduct (paragraph 50) to register and disclose their interests. This must be done within 28 days of becoming a member or being re-elected to office.

- 1.3 Members must ensure their register of interests is kept up to date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
- 1.4 A member is also required under the Council's Code of Conduct (paragraph 59) to register the offer of any gift or hospitality, whether accepted or not, with an estimated value of at least £25. They must include the person from whom it is received.
- 1.5 Repeated smaller gifts and hospitality which, when combined, would likely exceed £25 within any three-month period should also be declared.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 For those Members who have not made individual requests to have their addresses withheld from the website, the Council could reinstate them and require individual requests to be made to the Monitoring Officer. This could leave those Members open to abuse, violence or intimidation.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

Register of Interests

- 3.1 In order to maintain an accurate register of Members' interests, Democratic Services send quarterly reminders to all Members via the Members' Bulletin to ensure that their declarations are up to date.
- 3.2 Two of these reminders (January and July), request that Members respond to officers to confirm that their current register of interests is correct.
- 3.3 The reminder in January was followed by an email to all Members asking them to confirm that their register of interests was up to date. Responses were received from all Members, either notifying officers of changes or to confirm that there were none and the current register is correct.
- 3.4 A further reminder was sent in April via the Members' Bulletin.
- 3.5 Fortnightly reports have been provided by Committee Services detailing Members' declarations made at meetings, which have been checked against each Member's register of interests to ensure it is accurate.

Gifts and Hospitality

- 3.6 The email sent to all Members in January also included a reminder to ensure any offers of gifts and hospitality were declared.
- 3.7 During the period 16 November to 31 May, eight declarations were received. The details are set out in Table 1 below.

Name	Date received	Type	Accepted/declined	Date declared	On time	Provided by	Estimated value	Description
Mayor Lutfur Rahman	22.12.23	Gift	Accepted	19.01.24	Yes	Chinese Embassy, 49-51 Portland Place, W1B 1JL	£25.00	Gift box of biscuits
Cllr Shafi Ahmed	25.01.24	Gift	Accepted	20.02.24	Yes	Chinese Embassy, 49-51 Portland Place, W1B 1JL	£30	Special tea
Cllr Jahed Choudhury	26.02.24	Gift	Accepted	19.03.24	Yes	Mile End American Pool & Snooker, E1 4AA	£65	Snooker cue
Cllr Maium Talukdar	26.02.24	Gift	Accepted	20.03.24	Yes	Mile End Snooker Club, E1 4AA	£65	Snooker cue
Cllr Rachel Blake	04.04.24	Hospitality	Accepted	21.05.24	No	London Central Mosque Trust and Islamic Cultural Centre, 146 Park Road, NW8 7RG	£50	Iftar dinner at London Central Mosque and Islamic Cultural Centre
Cllr Rachel Blake	04.04.24	Hospitality	Accepted	21.05.24	No	1919 M Street NW, Ste 300	£50	Dinner with PPI and Congress delegation as a parliamentary candidate
Cllr Rachel Blake	14.04.24	Hospitality	Accepted	21.05.24	No	Society of London Theatre, 32 Rose St, WC2E 9ET	£525	Tickets for the Olivier Awards as a guest of the Society of London Theatre
Cllr Rachel Blake	15.05.24	Hospitality	Accepted	21.05.24	Yes	Save the Children, 1 St John's Lane	£40	Reception dinner for parliamentary candidates with Save the Children, Child Poverty Action Group, United against Malnutrition and Hunger

Table 1

- 3.8 Five declarations were received within the 28 day deadline, and three were received after this time.
- 3.9 The timetable for reminders over the next 12 months is set out in Table 2 below.

Timetable	
Quarterly reminder – Members’ Bulletin and email requesting confirmation that registers are up to date and all gifts and hospitality have been declared	July 2024
Quarterly reminder – Members’ Bulletin	October 2024
Quarterly reminder – Members’ Bulletin and email requesting confirmation that registers are up to date and all gifts and hospitality have been declared	January 2025
Quarterly reminder – Members’ Bulletin	April 2025

Sensitive Interests

- 3.10 The quarterly update to the Committee on 7 December referred to an increase in requests from Members to withhold their addresses from the website as a sensitive interest, because of a rise in abuse on social media and by email. This was due to heightened tensions in the borough related to the conflict in Israel and Palestine.
- 3.11 The week after the meeting the Monitoring Officer asked that all Members’ addresses be removed from the website for their safety.
- 3.12 Members’ safety has continued to be a concern with additional security being provided at some surgery venues, and advice on personal safety being circulated in the Members’ Bulletin.
- 3.13 In response to concerns from elected members about intimidation in public life, Simon Hoare MP, Minister for Local Government, wrote to local authority Chief Executives in March this year, reminding them of the sensitive provisions in Section 32 of the Localism Act 2011. These provide for details about a registered interest to be withheld from the public register where there is a fear of violence or intimidation if they are disclosed, and the Minister encouraged monitoring officers to look sympathetically at accommodating requests (Appendix 1).
- 3.14 The Government also announced additional funding to ensure elected representatives will have a dedicated named police contact for raising concerns and liaising on security. Details of the named police contact for Tower Hamlets was circulated in the Members’ Bulletin of 22 March 2024.
- 3.15 The Interim Monitoring Officer is of the view that the security and safety concerns which resulted in the original decision to remove all Member home addresses from the website remain and so at this time all home addresses remain redacted. This will be kept under review.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Removing all members’ addresses is helpful in demonstrating protective measures are available to all members, regardless of their views in any particular area.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority. The same section requires local authorities to adopt a code of conduct dealing with the conduct expected to elected and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting as members.

7.2 Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer of a local authority to establish and maintain a register of members' interests.

7.3 Appendix B of the Code of Conduct for Members (set out in Part C of the Constitution) sets out details of the interests which must be registered and the timescales for doing so.

7.4 Section 32 of the Localism Act 2011 permits the withholding of sensitive interests where the member concerned and the monitoring officer consider that disclosure of the interest could lead to the Member or a person connected with the Member being subject to violence and intimidation. Appendix B of the Code of Conduct for Members (Part C of the Constitution) permits the Monitoring Officer to withhold such sensitive interests from the register.

7.5 The matters set out in this report demonstrate the Council's compliance with the above legislation and the Council's Constitution.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE .

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Withholding details of councillors’ sensitive interests and home addresses: letter to local authorities.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Simon Hoare MP
Minister for Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Chief Executives of Local Authorities in England

18 March 2024

Dear Colleague,

Withholding details of councillors' sensitive interests and home addresses

In response to recent concerns from elected members about intimidation in public life, I want to ensure that all councillors and elected mayors are aware of the sensitive provisions in Section 32 of the Localism Act 2011.¹

The sensitive interests' provisions provide for details about a registered interest to be excluded from versions of the Register of Interests available for public inspection (or published online) where a member and monitoring officer agree that the disclosure of that interest could lead to violence or intimidation of them or their family. They provide for members to disclose that they have an interest but for the details to be withheld from the public register.

On receipt of this letter, I would be grateful to you bringing the contents to the attention of all current members of your Council and your Council's Monitoring Officer. The Government encourages monitoring officers to look sympathetically at accommodating requests for the withholding of home addresses from published versions of the register of interests where there are legitimate concerns of violence or intimidation.


Previously the Prime Minister, when Minister for Local Government in 2019, wrote to all Leaders of local authorities in England on this matter. I want to refresh awareness of the sensitive interests' provisions among the current cohort of councillors in response to recently raised concerns about councillors' personal safety.

This letter will be published on gov.uk for guidance purposes. I remain grateful to all those who serve their communities as local council members.

SIMON HOARE MP
Minister for Local Government

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/section/32>

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Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee 26 June 2024	
Report of: Linda Walker, Acting Director, Legal Services and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Dispensations under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion – Head of Democratic Services
Wards affected	(All Wards)

Executive Summary

This bi-annual report informs the Advisory Committee of dispensations in relation to disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI's) under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee are recommended to:

1. Note the update on Dispensations as set out in Paragraphs 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This is a bi-annual noting report informing members of the Advisory Committee of the dispensations granted by the Monitoring Officer in relation to DPI's.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Not applicable.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 The Code of Conduct for Members requires that the Mayor, Councillors and Co-opted Members register any disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) and other specified interests in the Register of Members Interests. If a Member has a DPI in relation to any matter to be discussed at a meeting they must:

- Not participate in any discussion of the agenda item, not vote on the matter and leave the room whilst the agenda item is discussed and voted on.
- 3.2 However, a Member who has a DPI in a matter to be discussed at a forthcoming meeting of the authority may make a written request before the meeting to the Monitoring Officer for a dispensation to enable them to participate in the discussion and vote.
- 3.3 A dispensation may be granted where the Monitoring Officer is satisfied that:
- (a) without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
 - (b) without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business;
 - (c) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area; or
 - (d) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.
- Any grant of a dispensation must specify the duration of the dispensation up to a maximum of 4 years.
- 3.4 **Specific Dispensation**
- There have been no Specific Dispensations granted at meetings in the period since the last report in September 2023.
- 3.5 **General Dispensation:** There is a continuing General Dispensation to all Members for their current four-year term of office to be present, speak and vote where they would otherwise have a DPI in the following matters:
- (a) Housing: where the Councillor (or spouse or partner) holds a tenancy or lease with the Council as long as the matter does not relate to the particular tenancy or lease of the Councillor (their spouse or partner);
 - (b) Council Tax: setting the council tax or a precept;
 - (c) Determining an allowance, travelling expense, payment or indemnity for Councillors
 - (d) Council Officer pay where this impacts on Member Allowances.
- 3.6 There have been no new General Dispensations granted at meetings in the period since the last report in September 2023.
- 3.7 Guidance issued by DCLG in September 2013 (Openness and transparency on personal interests) stated the DCLG view is that Members do not need a dispensation to take part in the business of setting the council tax or precept or local arrangements for council tax support because this is a decision affecting the generality of the public in the area rather than Members as individuals.

Nonetheless the Monitoring Officer considers it prudent for the sake of completeness to include Council Tax in the General Dispensation.

- 3.9 The dispensation for Council Tax relates to a Member's DPI and does not affect a Member's obligation under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to declare and not vote if they are 2 months or more in arrears with their Council Tax when voting on setting the Council's budget.
- 3.10 The General Dispensation set out in Paragraph 3.5 will apply until the next Mayoral and local elections in May 2026.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.

- 5.2 The Monitoring Officer has introduced a standard application form for Members to complete when seeking a dispensation in order to make the process more efficient and transparent.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

7. LEGAL COMMENTS

- 7.1 Section 31(4) of the Localism Act 2011 provides that a Member who has a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered at a meeting may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter. However, by virtue of section 33, an authority may, on a written request by a Member, grant a dispensation relieving the member from either or both of the restrictions in Section 31(4). This is reflected in paragraph 54 and Appendix B of the Code of Conduct for Members.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- NONE

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

- N/A

Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee Wednesday, 26 June 2024	
Report of: Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Standards Advisory Committee - report on Code of Conduct matters for the year 2023-2024	

Originating Officer(s)	Jill Bayley, Head of Safeguarding and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Wards affected	(All Wards);

Executive Summary

This report updates the Advisory Committee on the monitoring information for complaints and investigations relating to alleged breaches Council’s Code of Conduct for Members for the municipal year May 2023 – May 2024. It also updates the Advisory Committee on quarterly monitoring information on alleged breaches of the Council’s Code of Conduct to the end of May 2024.

Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the content of this report and the information contained in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council’s ‘Arrangements for dealing with complaints of breach of the Code of Conduct for Members’ (paragraph 11), set out at Appendix A of the Code of Conduct for Members, provide for the Monitoring Officer to report quarterly (or less frequently if there are no complaints to report) to the Advisory Committee on the number and nature of complaints received and action taken as a result.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

2.1 Not applicable.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The provision of quarterly reports relating to the number and nature of complaints assists the Advisory Committee in exercising its oversight role in terms of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct.
- 3.2 The Advisory Committee last considered a monitoring report at its meeting on 7 December 2023. Since that report there have been four new complaints of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct made before the end of the municipal year on 30 April 2024. Since the start of the new municipal year on 1 May 2024, there have been two new complaints of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct.
- 3.3 Of the complaints made between the date of the last Advisory Committee meeting and the end of the municipal year, two have been closed after a decision was made that they did not warrant further investigation.
- 3.4 Both the complaints made since the beginning of the current municipal year remain open.
- 3.5 The two complaints which remained open from the municipal year 2022-3 at the time of the last Advisory Committee have both been closed. The complaint from the early part of the municipal year 2023-4 has also been closed. The only complaints which remain open are the four recent ones, as set out above.
- 3.6 A breakdown of the complaints which were live in the municipal year 2023-4 is contained in Appendix 1. This breakdown is accurate as at 30 April 2024. A breakdown of the complaints from the municipal year 2024-5 (accurate as at 31 May 2024) is contained in Appendix 2.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
 - Consultations,
 - Environmental (including air quality),

- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the noting of the complaints report.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 The principal statutory provisions relating to standards of conduct are contained in the Localism Act 2011. Section 27(1) of the 2011 Act provides that the Council must promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Co-opted Members of the authority.

7.2 Sections 27 and 28 of the Localism Act require the Council to adopt a Code of Conduct consistent with the Nolan principles of good governance and to appoint at least one Independent Person whose views must be sought and taken into account before the Council makes any decision about an alleged breach of the Code that has been investigated.

7.3 The matters in this report demonstrate the Local Authority's compliance with the above legislation.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Breakdown of complaints live during the municipal year 2023-4.
- Appendix 2 – Breakdown of complaints live from 1 May 2024 – 31 May 2024.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

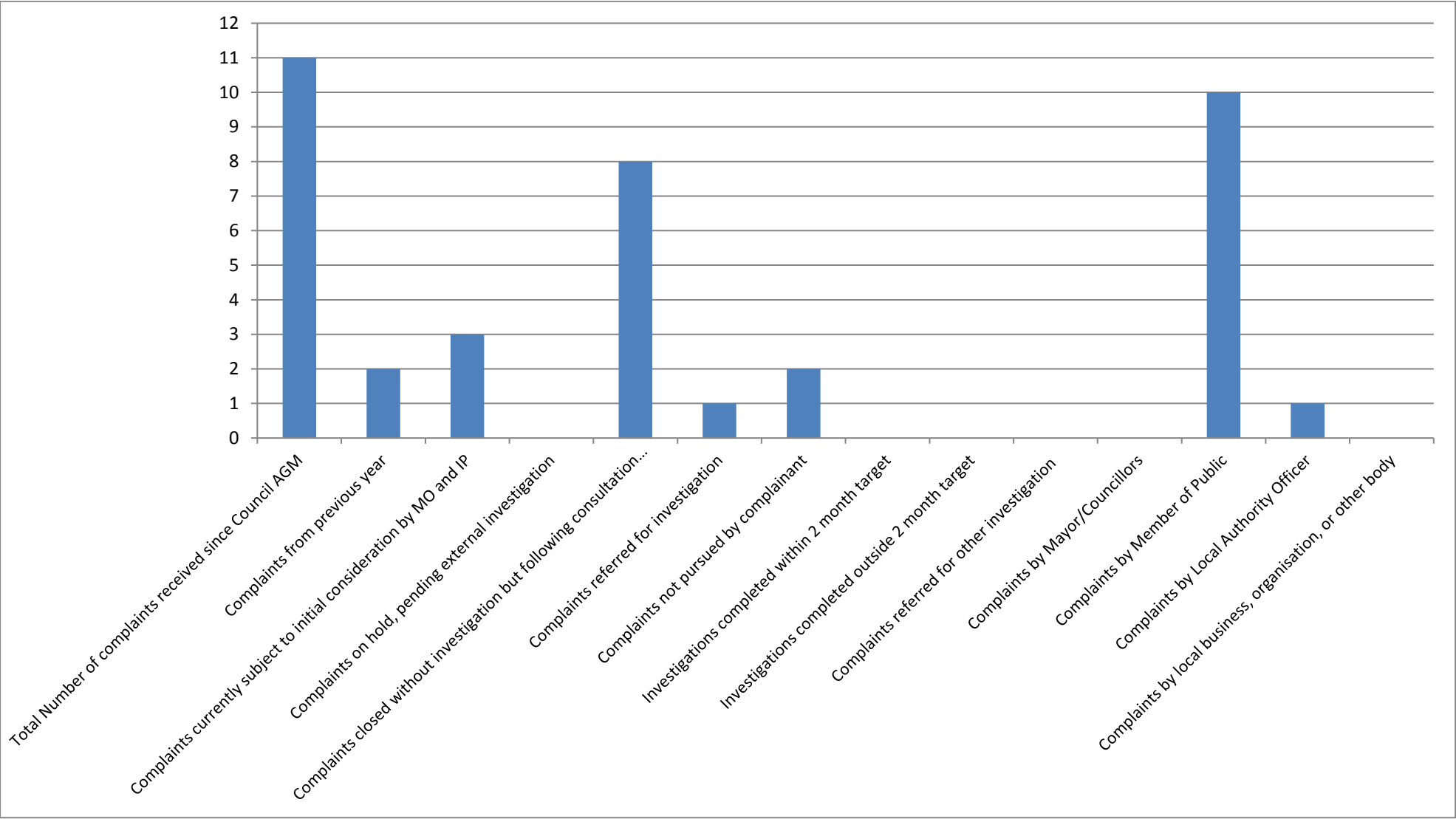
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APPENDIX 1

Code of Conduct for Members - complaints and investigation monitoring information – municipal year 2024

Complaints since May 2023:	11
Complaints from previous year:	02
Complaints currently subject to initial consideration by MO and IP:	03
Complaints closed without investigation but following consultation with IP:	08
Complaints referred for investigation as potential breach of the Code:	01
Complaints not pursued by complainant:	02
Investigations completed within 2 month target:	00
Investigations completed outside 2 month target:	00
Complaints referred for other investigation (police, audit etc.)	00
<u>Complainants</u>	
Mayor/Councillors:	00
Member of Public:	10
Local Authority Officer	01
Local business, organisation, or other body:	00

Code of Conduct Complaints 2023/2024



Reference number	Date received by Monitoring Officer	Complainant	Elected/Co-opted Member(s)	Nature of Complaint and potential breach(es) of the Code of Conduct	Date and outcome of consultation with IP	Date investigation commenced and investigation status	Hearing and outcome	Current status	Follow up
008/2022	03/02/2023	Member of the Public	Elected member	<p>Alleged complaint – Bribery, misconduct in a public office and malfeasance of a public official.</p> <p>Original complaint sent to Democratic Services</p>	<p>Target Date: 17/02/2023</p> <p>09/02/2023 - Acknowledgement email sent to complainant.</p> <p>21/02/2023 – Email sent to Cllr to confirm a complaint has been received however due to it being investigated by the Police a decision on how to proceed will follow after the Police investigation has concluded.</p> <p>22/02/2023 – IP has been made aware of the current status</p> <p>13/07/2023 – Investigation outcome provided by the Police to the frauds team.</p> <p>19/07/2023 – Update provided to complainant. Police found insufficient evidence for a prosecution. DMO to meet IP and advice on next steps.</p> <p>21/07/2023 – DMO consulted with IP. Although there is evidence of wrongdoing at this stage unable to proceed as there is a lack of evidence to link it to the Cllr. DMO to draft an email to Cllr to ask for initial response of the complaint.</p> <p>24/08/2023 – Email sent to Cllr to provide initial response.</p> <p>30/08/2023 – Cllr acknowledged the email, advised away on leave and will respond upon their return (week commencing 4 Sep 2023).</p>	06/10/2023 – Full Investigation.		Closed	

				<p>14/09/2023 – Chaser email sent to Cllr and advised to respond before 21/09/23.</p> <p>21/09/2023 – Letter received from Paralegal/ITN solicitors acting on behalf of the Cllr.</p> <p>22/09/2023 – Acknowledgment email sent to ITN solicitors from DMO.</p> <p>22/09/2023 – DMO to consult IP week commencing 25/09.</p> <p>02/10/2023 – DMO consulted with IP</p> <p>02/11/2023 – DMO consulting DoL&MO. IP has agreed the matter should go to an independent investigator due to the seriousness of the allegation. Awaiting approval by the Director of Legal & Monitoring Officer (DoL&MO).</p> <p>06/10/2023 - DMO sent report to external investigator/DMO to chase within next 2 weeks on progress 03/11/2023</p> <p>03/11/2023 - External investigators have received papers and making progress.</p> <p>20/11/2023 – external investigator reports making slow progress.</p> <p>07/02/2024 - Draft report received</p> <p>27/02/2024 - Email to be sent Cllr confirming that the matter is concluded.</p> <p>01/02/2024 - Report with MO currently working on this</p> <p>09/04/2024- Email & report sent to Cllr & Complainant informing case now closed due to insufficient evidence.</p>				
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011/2022	02/03/2023	Member of the public	Elected Member	Alleged complaint – mishandling of consultation paper/surveys. Cllr seen to be carrying/picking up from public.	<p>Target Date: 16/03/2023</p> <p>08/03/23 – Acknowledgement email sent to complainant.</p> <p>08/03/23 – Email sent to Cllr to provide initial response.</p> <p>20/03/2023 – Chaser sent to Cllr to provide initial response.</p> <p>12/04/2023 – Chaser sent to Cllr to provide initial response.</p> <p>14/04/2023 – Initial response received from Cllr.</p> <p>27/04/2023 – Consulted IP – Outcome: - proceed with full investigation.</p> <p>12/05/2023 – Meeting with complainant. Additional information provided along with contact details of witnesses.</p> <p>09/06/2023 – meeting with further witness</p> <p>21/06/2023 – Seeking to consult with members of the consultation team.</p> <p>08/09/2023 - DMO is awaiting statement from consultation lead. DMO to chase.</p> <p>22/09/2023 – Email sent to Cllr from DMO to arrange an interview. Cllr to confirm availability.</p> <p>29/09/2023 – Email sent from DMO to Cllr with an invitation to meeting on 05/10/2023 at 11am. Acknowledgment email received by Cllr.</p>	27/04/2023 - Full Investigation		Closed	

					<p>05/11/23 - Cllr had meeting with DMO, statement approved & report being drafted.</p> <p>27/02/2024 - Report being finalised in preparation in sending out to complainant and Cllr.</p> <p>25/03/2024 - DMO sent report to Cllr and Complainant and informed that Code of Conduct does not apply on this occasion</p> <p>24/03/2024 - Please note the complainant has complained to the LGO because of delays.</p> <p>22/04/24 - complainant will be sending comments on report.</p> <p>29/04/2024 - Comments received from complainant</p> <p>29/05/24 - final report with comments sent out to complainant and councillor.</p>				
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Reference number	Date received by Monitoring Officer	Complainant	Elected/Co-opted Member(s)	Nature of Complaint and potential breach(es) of the Code of Conduct	Date and outcome of consultation with IP	Date investigation commenced and investigation status	Hearing and outcome	Current status	Follow up
001/2023	25/05/2023	Member of the public (via advocate)	Elected Member	Alleged complaint – Cllr's failure to acknowledge, update and lack of compassion shown with the matter raised by the complainant regarding a request made to the housing association and local council for a personalised disabled parking bay.	<p>Target date: 08/06/2023</p> <p>08/06/2023 – Acknowledgment email/letter sent to advocate to confirm complainant has requested the advocate to make the complaint on their behalf.</p> <p>16/06/2023 – Reminder email sent to advocate to respond.</p> <p>19/06/2023 – Response received from advocate that they have contacted the complainant to confirm/respond.</p> <p>03/07/2023 – Chaser email sent to advocate for an update.</p> <p>15/07/2023 – Chaser/update email sent to the advocate to confirm if they have received confirmation from the complainant.</p> <p>26/07/2023 – Confirmation received from advocate from the complainant that the advocate can act on their behalf.</p> <p>07/09/2023 – Email sent to Cllr to provide initial response.</p> <p>07/09/2023 – Cllr requesting details of complainant to refer to correspondences relating to the matter.</p> <p>08/09/2023 – Email sent to advocate seeking consent to share details of both advocate and complainant to the Cllr so that the Cllr can refer to correspondences relating to the matter.</p>	N/A	N/A	Closed	N/A

					<p>08/09/2023 – Update email sent to Cllr, DMO is seeking consent from advocate and complainant.</p> <p>18/09/2023 – Advocate and complainant confirmed they are happy to share details with Cllr.</p> <p>26/09/2023 – Email sent to Cllr with details of complainant and advocate. Cllr requested to provide initial statement for DMO to review.</p> <p>02/10/2023 – Cllr provided initial response.</p> <p>04/10/2023 – IP has been sent all the relevant correspondences to review and confirm availability to consult with DMO.</p> <p>10/10/2023 – Outcome email sent to councillor – case now concluded</p> <p>10/10/2023- Letter sent to complainant – case now concluded</p>				
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002/2023	13/06/2023	LA - Officer	Elected Member	Alleged complaint – Cllr's behaviour during a recent HR committee meeting was hostile and intimidating. The way the Cllr behaved fell below the standards expected of members when conducting themselves with officers.	<p>Target date: 27/06/2023</p> <p>16/06/2023 – Acknowledgment email sent to complainant.</p> <p>16/06/2023 - Email sent to Cllr to provide initial response.</p> <p>23/06/2023 – Cllr requesting further information from DMO.</p> <p>03/07/2023 – DMO provided information as requested by the Cllr.</p> <p>04/07/2023 – Initial response including supporting correspondence provided by Cllr.</p> <p>21/07/2023 – DMO consulted IP.</p> <p>26/07/2023 – Complainant notified the matter will proceed to a full investigation.</p> <p>14/08/2023 – Meeting with complainant.</p> <p>08/09/2023 - DMO has received 1 witness statement and a statement from the complainant. DMO Awaiting a further witness statement before arranging a meeting with the Cllr.</p> <p>22/09/2023 – Email sent to Cllr from DMO to arrange an interview. Cllr to confirm availability.</p> <p>29/09/2023 – – Email sent from DMO to Cllr with an invitation to meeting on 05/10/2023. Acknowledgment email received by Cllr.</p>	26/07/2023 – Full Investigation		Open	

					<p>6/10/2023 - DMO emails Cllr with an update on investigation.</p> <p>6/10/2023 - Complainant emails DMO – requesting timescales of expected outcome as due to leave the organisation at the end of year</p> <p>9/10/2023 - DMO discussed with IP today to discuss complaint.</p> <p>10/10/2023- complainant emailed DMO that they leave the council this week, appreciate if any final report/outcome from my complaint is sent to my personal email address, personal email provided.</p> <p>10/10/2023 - DMO emailed confirmation that draft report will be sent to personal email once drafted.</p> <p>Report written & approved by MO- draft report sent to 17/11/23 with IP for approval – Once approved to be sent out to Cllr & complainant</p> <p>20/11/2023 – IP approves draft report.</p> <p>20/11/2023 – draft report sent out to Cllr and complainant.</p> <p>20/11/2023 - Complainant responded to DMO</p> <p>2/2/2024 - DMO sent email to Cllr regarding the informal resolution proposal, requesting a response by 9th Feb 24</p>				
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					<p>16/2/24 - DMO sent IP full report with appendices</p> <p>21/02/24 - IP advised that the matter should go to a hearing, as the councillor had not responded to the offer of an informal resolution.</p> <p>21/02/24 - DMO sent copy of final version of the report with appendices to Cllr & informed them that due to not having agreed to the proposed informal resolution by the date which Cllr gave (16 February 2024) the matter will proceed to a hearing</p> <p>21/02/24 - DMO requested arrangements for a hearing committee to be set up</p> <p>5/03/24 - Awaiting decision from MO</p> <p>25/03/2024 - Complainant updated</p> <p>20/04/2024 - Discussion to be held between DMO & MO</p> <p>29/04/2024- Complainant has provided comments on report to be discussed with monitoring officer</p>				
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003/2023	20/06/2023	Member of the public	Elected Member	Alleged complaint – Breach of the Islamophobia Definition adopted by Tower Hamlets Council. During a recent committee meeting, Cllr showed microaggression towards Muslim members of the committee, and made unfounded accusations. Which complainant believes is in breach of the APPG Islamophobia definition.	<p>Target date: 04/07/2023</p> <p>27/06/2023 – Acknowledgment email sent to complainant.</p> <p>27/06/2023 – Email sent to Cllr to provide initial response.</p> <p>04/07/2023 – Cllr acknowledged the email and asked if any evidence of the allegation has been provided.</p> <p>05/07/2023 – DMO seeking further clarifications from the complainant.</p> <p>24/07/2023 – Chaser email sent to complainant.</p> <p>05/09/2023 – Chaser email sent to complainant seeking clarification of the complaint (SMSO to chase Cllr on 12 September).</p> <p>08/09/2023 – Email sent to Cllr with current updates.</p> <p>26/09/2023 – SMSO seeking advice from DMO on next steps. No response received from complainant despite chasers.</p> <p>04/10/2023 – Email sent to IP to arrange for consultation in the view to close the matter due to no response from complainant despite multiple chasers.</p> <p>10/10/2023 – Outcome email sent to complainant -case closed</p> <p>10/10/2023 – Outcome emailed to councillor – case closed</p>	N/A	N/A	Closed	N/A

Reference number	Date received by Monitoring Officer	Complainant	Elected/Co-opted Member(s)	Nature of Complaint and potential breach(es) of the Code of Conduct	Date and outcome of consultation with IP	Date investigation commenced and investigation status	Hearing and outcome	Current status	Follow up
004/2023	06/07/2023	Member of the public	Elected Member	<p>Alleged complaint – Complainant believes Cllr is not following the Equality Act 2010 or the Care Act 2014.</p> <p>Mistreatment and discriminating behaviour towards complainant because of disability.</p>	<p>Target date: 20/07/2023</p> <p>(Originally complainant complained on 6 June 2023 however on the same they wished to withdraw the complaint. Complainant sent an email to the mayors Team and cc'd in MO inbox and after emailing for confirmation if they wish to proceed, complainant asked to go ahead with the original complaint)</p> <p>24/07/2023 - Acknowledgment email sent to complainant.</p> <p>24/07/2023 – Email sent to Cllr to provide initial response.</p> <p>14/08/2023 – Chaser email sent to Cllr.</p> <p>07/09/2023 – Chaser email sent to Cllr.</p> <p>08/09/2023 – DMO seeking advice from Director of Legal & Monitoring Officer on next steps on Cllr's failure to respond.</p> <p>25/09/2023 – Final chaser sent to Cllr to provide initial response by 5pm 29/09/2023.</p> <p>02/10/2023 – No response received from Cllr despite chaser/deadline. DMO to consult with IP.</p> <p>14/11/2023 - DMO sent email requesting contact by 4pm on Friday 17.11.23 to arrange a discussion. If no response then DMO will not be able to pursue your complaint.</p> <p>14/11/2023 - DMO spoke to complainant and due to meet with IP 20/11/23</p>	N/A	N/A	Closed	N/A

					20/11/2023 - Email sent to complainant to inform complaint has now been closed				
					20/11/2023 - Email sent to Cllr to inform complaint now closed due to matter complained of is not the responsibility of you or of the Council.				

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005/2023	02/10/2023	Member of the public	Elected Member	Alleged complaint – Complainant witnessed Cllr assisting another person with moving a couch which was then fly tipped on complainants' estate	<p>Target Date: 16/10/2023</p> <p>Initial complainant complained 02/10/2023</p> <p>04/10/2023 – DMO requested further information from complainant.</p> <p>04/10/2023 – Complainant provided requested information.</p> <p>05/10/2023 – Acknowledgement email sent to complainant.</p> <p>05/10/2023 – Email sent to Cllr to provide initial response</p> <p>03/11/2023 - Email sent to Cllr to provide a response and informed that DMO can still proceed with complaint if Cllr doesn't respond</p> <p>5/11/2023 - Cllr responded</p> <p>8/11/2023 - Request sent to Cllr to clarify further on the complaint</p> <p>10/11/2023 -DMO emailed Cllr informing them that the complainant had provided more information and if the Cllr could on the additional information.</p> <p>27/11/2023 - no response from Cllr</p> <p>4/12/2023 - DMO emailed Cllr to arrange a call for clarification regarding complaint</p> <p>21/02/24 - DMO & IP to meet to discuss complaint</p>	N/A	N/A	Closed	N/A

					<p>21/02/24 - Email sent to Cllr with several questions to respond to by 4pm on 28th February.</p> <p>21/02/24 - Email received from Cllr with update to the email sent 21/02/24</p> <p>22/02/24 - Another email received from Cllr with update to the email sent 21/02/24</p> <p>26/02/24 - IP & DMO concluded complaint should not be investigated further as the councillor was not acting as a Member at the time of the incident.</p> <p>26/02/24 - Email sent to Cllr informing outcome of complaint and complaint now closed.</p> <p>26/2/2024 - Email sent to Complainant informing outcome of complaint & that complaint now closed.</p> <p>27/02/2024 - Email received from complainant requesting further information</p> <p>8/03/2024 - Email response sent to Complainant answering his previous email with further information request.</p>				
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006/2023					Complainant alleged disagreement with Cllr with no further details. The online complaint form was not completed despite requesting. <i>Please note a number had been allocated as this was initially logged in error.</i>				

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007/2023	03/11/2023	Member of the public	Elected Member	financial interests within other charity led organisations within Isle of Dogs	<p>Target date: 17/11/2023</p> <p>complainant complained on 03/11/2023</p> <p>03/11/2023 – DMO requested further information from complainant.</p> <p>6/11/2023 - Email sent to Complainant for further information</p> <p>8/11/2023 - DMO requested email sent to Cllr for a response to the complaint</p> <p>20/11/2023 - Reminder email sent to Cllr for response to email sent on 8/11/23</p> <p>29/11/2023 - Email sent to IP to meet with DMO</p> <p>01/12/2023 - 2nd Email sent to IP to meet to discuss complaint</p> <p>04/12/2023 – Consultation meeting scheduled with I.P</p> <p>07/12/2023 - Email sent to complainant to inform complaint has now been closed</p> <p>07/12/2023 - Email sent to Cllr to inform complaint is now closed as DMO & IP concluded that the complaint does not merit formal investigation.</p>	N/A	N/A	Closed	N/A

Reference number	Date received by Monitoring Officer	Complainant	Elected/Co-opted Member(s)	Nature of Complaint and potential breach(es) of the Code of Conduct	Date and outcome of consultation with IP	Date investigation commenced and investigation status*	Hearing and outcome	Current status	Follow up
008/2023	18/11/2023	Member of Public	Elected Member	Tweets on social Media	<p>Target date: 24/11/2023</p> <p>08/11/2023 – Complaint received</p> <p>19/10/2023 – requested to log online to progress further</p> <p>25/10/2023 – DMO requested further information from complainant & to send complaint in via letter as complainant cannot upload via system</p> <p>8/11/2023 - Complaint letter/evidence received from information</p> <p>8/11/2023 - DMO requested further information & complaint logged</p> <p>13/11/2023 - Additional information received from Complainant</p> <p>13/11/2023 - Additional information sent to DMO</p> <p>14/11/2023 - DMO requested complaint be sent to Cllr for response</p> <p>20/11/2023 - Initial complaint resent to Cllr as email was returned unsent</p> <p>20/11/2023 – Cllr responds</p> <p>26/11/2023 - Emailed IP to arrange a discussion with DMO</p>	N/A	N/A	Closed	N/A

					<p>29/11/2023 - DMO met with IP to discuss complaint</p> <p>03/12/2023 - Email sent to complainant to inform complaint has now been closed</p> <p>03/12/2023 - Email sent to Cllr to inform complaint now closed</p>				
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009/2023					Complainant alleged defamation of character with no further details. An email with link to complete online complaint form was sent and despite chasing no response recieved. <i>Please note a number had been allocated as this was initially logged in error.</i>				

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010/2023	30 th January 2024	Member of Public	Elected Member	Formal complaint against two ward Councillors who have been involving themselves in the affairs of a charity.	<p>Target Date:</p> <p>30/1/2024 - Emailed complainant for further information</p> <p>20/1/2024 - Email sent requesting to provide further details of what the alleged interference had been.</p> <p>12/1/2024 - Complainant responded with further details</p> <p>17/1/2024 - Email sent requesting further detailed information into the complaint.</p> <p>29/1/2024 - Email received from Complainant with further information.</p> <p>30/1/2024 - Email sent to complainant requesting additional information with regards to the complaint.</p> <p>11/03/2023 - Send all information to IP to discuss closure</p> <p>28/02/2023 - Email sent to Cllr & Complainant that matter has now been closed. No findings.</p>	N/A	N/A	Closed	

Reference number	Date received by Monitoring Officer	Complainant	Elected/Co-opted Member(s)	Nature of Complaint and potential breach(es) of the Code of Conduct	Date and outcome of consultation with IP	Date investigation commenced and investigation status	Hearing and outcome	Current status	Follow up
011/2023	18 th February 2024	Member of Public	Cllr	conduct of Cllr during meeting held on November 30th, 2023.	<p>18/02/2024 - logged complaint received</p> <p>20/2/2024 - DMO requested complaint be sent to Cllr for response</p> <p>05/03/2024 - Email sent to Cllr for response to complaint</p> <p>11/03/2024 - 2nd Reminder email sent to Cllr for response to complaint</p> <p>11/03/24 - Email received from Cllr stating was away at time previous emails sent, stated will respond appropriately with a follow up email once looked further into the matter. Email forwarded onto DMO</p> <p>19/03/24 - email received from Cllr</p> <p>27/03/24 - discussion between DMO and IP</p> <p>03/03/2024 - Email sent to Cllr & Complainant that matter has now closed. No findings</p>	N/A	N/A	Closed	

Reference number	Date received by Monitoring Officer	Complainant	Elected/Co-opted Member(s)	Nature of Complaint and potential breach(es) of the Code of Conduct	Date and outcome of consultation with IP	Date investigation commenced and investigation status	Hearing and outcome	Current status	Follow up
012/2023	4 th March 2024	Member of Public	Cllr	Failed to effectively support Tenants and residents living on an Estate about damp & mould issue inside many resident's homes	<p>05/03/2024 - logged complaint received</p> <p>05/3/2024 - DMO requested email to be sent to complainant for requested documents stated in the complaint</p> <p>5/03/2024 - Email sent to complainant for requested documents/emails.</p> <p>6/03/2024 - Email received from complainant with attached requested proof of documentation/emails.</p> <p>11/03/2024 - All documentation sent to Environmental department to address this complaint</p> <p>25/03/24 complainant says issue is lack of response from Cllr</p> <p>28/3/24 meeting between DMO and IP</p> <p>28/03/2023 - Email sent to Cllr requesting further information</p> <p>03/04/2023 - Email sent to complainant that DMO are awaiting Cllr response to complaint.</p> <p>23/04/2023 - Reminder email sent to Cllr for response to complaint</p>	N/A	N/A	Open	

					<p>07/05/2024 - Contacted Cllr via Teams with a request to the complaint. Cllr confirmed will look at the complaint and respond after work.</p> <p>08/05/2024 - Response to complaint received from Cllr</p>				
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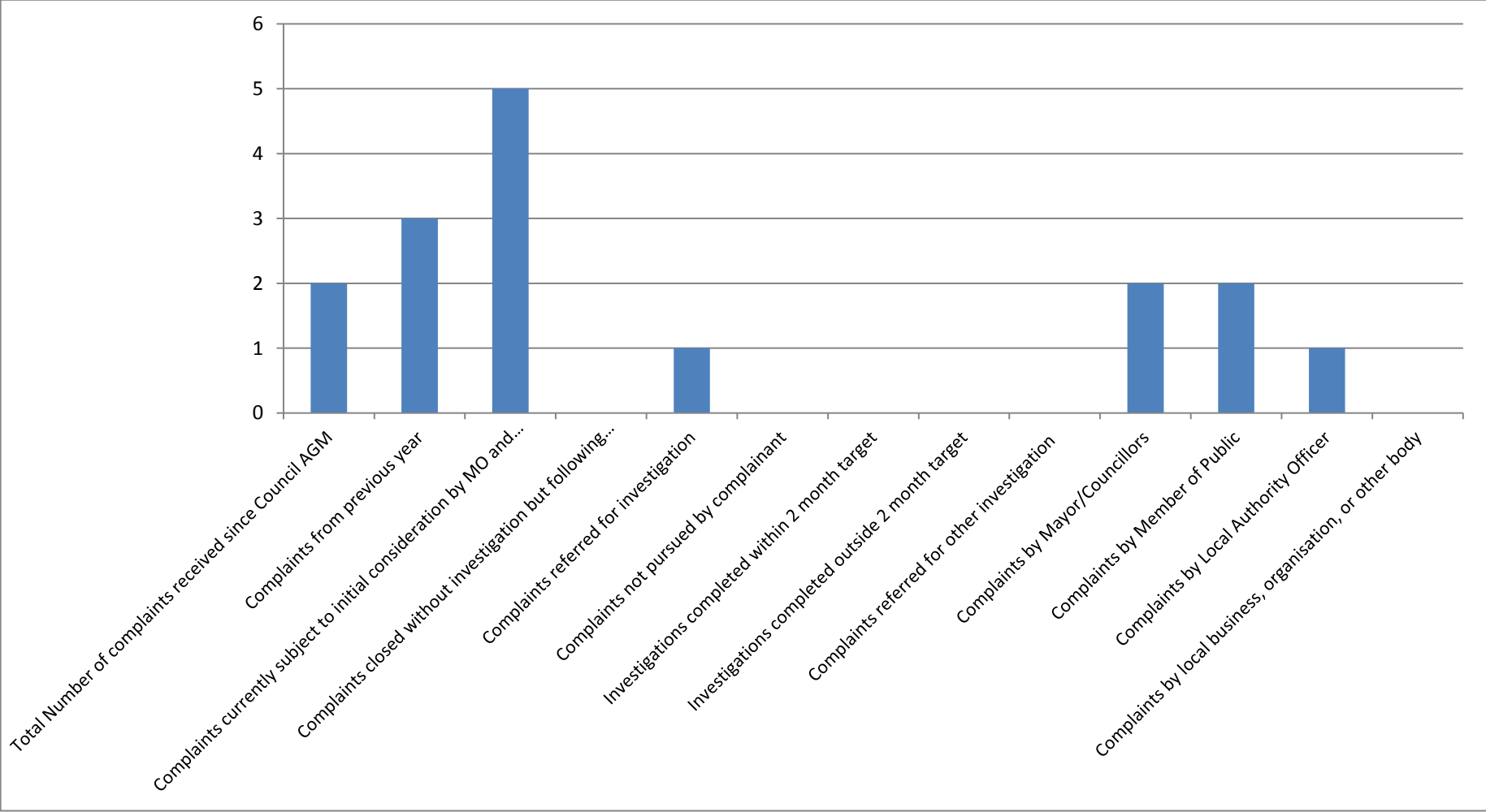
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013/2023	14/04/2023	Member of public	Cllr	contacted the member on several occasions on local issues of excessive speeding and dangerous driving	15/04/2023 - Email sent to Cllr with request to respond to complaint received	14/03/2023		Open	

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Code of Conduct for Members - complaints and investigation monitoring information – municipal year 2024

Complaints since May 2024:	02
Complaints from previous year:	03
Complaints currently subject to initial consideration by MO and IP:	05
Complaints closed without investigation but following consultation with IP:	00
Complaints referred for investigation as potential breach of the Code:	01
Complaints not pursued by complainant:	00
Investigations completed within 2 month target:	00
Investigations completed outside 2 month target:	00
Complaints referred for other investigation (police, audit etc.)	00
<u>Complainants</u>	
Mayor/Councillors:	02
Member of Public:	02
Local Authority Officer	01
Local business, organisation, or other body:	00

Code of Conduct Complaints 2024/2025



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002/2023	13/06/2023	LA - Officer	Elected Member	Alleged complaint – Cllr's behaviour during a recent HR committee meeting was hostile and intimidating. The way the Cllr behaved fell below the standards expected of members when conducting themselves with officers.	<p>Target date: 27/06/2023</p> <p>16/06/2023 – Acknowledgment email sent to complainant.</p> <p>16/06/2023 - Email sent to Cllr to provide initial response.</p> <p>23/06/2023 – Cllr requesting further information from DMO.</p> <p>03/07/2023 – DMO provided information as requested by the Cllr.</p> <p>04/07/2023 – Initial response including supporting correspondence provided by Cllr.</p> <p>21/07/2023 – DMO consulted IP.</p> <p>26/07/2023 – Complainant notified the matter will proceed to a full investigation.</p> <p>14/08/2023 – Meeting with complainant.</p> <p>08/09/2023 - DMO has received 1 witness statement and a statement from the complainant. DMO Awaiting a further witness</p>	26/07/2023 – Full Investigation		Open	

				<p>statement before arranging a meeting with the Cllr.</p> <p>22/09/2023 – Email sent to Cllr from DMO to arrange an interview. Cllr to confirm availability.</p> <p>29/09/2023 – – Email sent from DMO to Cllr with an invitation to meeting on 05/10/2023. Acknowledgment email received by Cllr.</p> <p>6/10/2023 - DMO emails Cllr with an update on investigation.</p> <p>6/10/2023 - Complainant emails DMO – requesting timescales of expected outcome as due to leave the organisation at the end of year</p> <p>9/10/2023 - DMO discussed with IP today to discuss complaint.</p> <p>10/10/2023- Complainant emailed DMO that they leave the council this week, appreciate if any final report/outcome from my complaint is sent to my personal email address, personal email provided.</p> <p>10/10/2023 - DMO emailed confirmation that draft report will be sent to personal email once drafted.</p> <p>Report written & approved by MO- draft report sent to 17/11/23 with IP</p>				
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					<p>for approval – Once approved to be sent out to Cllr & complainant</p> <p>20/11/2023 – IP approves draft report.</p> <p>20/11/2023 – draft report sent out to Cllr and complainant.</p> <p>20/11/2023 - Complainant responded to DMO</p> <p>2/2/2024 - DMO sent email to Cllr regarding the informal resolution proposal, requesting a response by 9th Feb 24</p> <p>16/2/24 - DMO sent IP full report with appendices</p> <p>21/02/24 - IP advised that the matter should go to a hearing, as the councillor had not responded to the offer of an informal resolution.</p> <p>21/02/24 - DMO sent copy of final version of the report with appendices to Cllr & informed them that due to not having agreed to the proposed informal resolution by the date which Cllr gave (16 February 2024) the matter will proceed to a hearing</p> <p>21/02/24 - DMO requested arrangements for a hearing committee to be set up</p>				
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5/03/24 - Awaiting decision from MO

25/03/2024 - Complainant updated

20/04/2024 - Discussion to be held between DMO & MO

29/04/2024- Complainant has provided comments on report to be discussed with monitoring officer

Reference number	Date received by Monitoring Officer	Complainant	Elected/Co-opted Member(s)	Nature of Complaint and potential breach(es) of the Code of Conduct	Date and outcome of consultation with IP	Date investigation commenced and investigation status	Hearing and out-come	Current status	Follow up
012/2023	04/03/2024	Member of Public	Cllr	Failed to effectively support Tenants and residents living on an Estate about damp & mould issue inside many resident's homes	<p>05/03/2024 - logged complaint received</p> <p>05/3/2024 - DMO requested email to be sent to complainant for requested documents stated in the complaint</p> <p>5/03/2024 - Email sent to complainant for requested documents/emails.</p> <p>6/03/2024 - Email received from complainant with attached requested proof of documentation/emails.</p> <p>11/03/2024 - All documentation sent to Environmental department to address this complaint</p> <p>25/03/24 complainant says issue is lack of response from Cllr</p> <p>28/3/24 meeting between DMO and IP</p> <p>28/03/2023 - Email sent to Cllr requesting further information</p>	05/03/2024	N/A	Open	

03/04/2023 - Email sent to complainant that DMO are awaiting Cllr response to complaint.

23/04/2023 - Reminder email sent to Cllr for response to complaint

07/05/2024 - Contacted Cllr via Teams with a request to the complaint. Cllr confirmed will look at the complaint and respond after work.

08/05/2024 - Response to complaint received from Cllr

10/05/2024 - email sent to Cllr requesting email chain they refer to in their response email.

Reference number	Date received by Monitoring Officer	Complainant	Elected/Co-opted Member(s)	Nature of Complaint and potential breach(es) of the Code of Conduct	Date and outcome of consultation with IP	Date investigation commenced and investigation status	Hearing and out-come	Current status	Follow up
013/2023	14/04/2023	Member of public	Cllr	contacted the member on several occasions on local issues of excessive speeding and dangerous driving	<p>15/04/2024 - Email sent to Cllr with request to respond to complaint received</p> <p>23/04/2024 - Email sent to Cllr with request to respond to complaint received.</p> <p>08/05/24 - Email & teams message sent to Cllr with regards to a request to respond to complaint.</p> <p>15/05/2024 - Email & Teams message sent to Cllr with request to respond to complaint received.</p> <p>20/05/2024 - Email & Teams message sent to Cllr with request to respond to complaint received.</p> <p>23/05/2024 - MO meet with Cllr at Audit meeting and reminded them of complaint and requested an urgent response. This was followed up by another email request sent 23/05/24</p>	14/03/2023		Open	

Reference number	Date received by Monitoring Officer	Complainant	Elected/Co-opted Member(s)	Nature of Complaint and potential breach(es) of the Code of Conduct	Date and outcome of consultation with IP	Date investigation commenced and investigation status	Hearing and out-come	Current status	Follow up
001/2024	03/05/2024	Cllr	Elected Cllr	conducted an interview that was published & stated inappropriate & defamatory comments	08/05/24 - Email sent to Cllr for comments. 12/05/2024 - Email response received from Cllr in regards to complaint	08/05/2024		Open	

Reference number	Date received by Monitoring Officer	Complainant	Elected/Co-opted Member(s)	Nature of Complaint and potential breach(es) of the Code of Conduct	Date and outcome of consultation with IP	Date investigation commenced and investigation status	Hearing and out-come	Current status	Follow up
002/2024	17/05/2024	Mayor	Elected Cllr	untrue allegations against the council and my administration during my previous term in office made	20/05/24 - Email sent to Cllr for comments.	20/05/2024		Open	

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Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee Thursday, 26 June 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
LGA Best Practice Guidance for Standards Committees	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, (Head of Democratic Services)
Wards affected	(All Wards);

Executive Summary

This report is to update the Committee on the proposed creation of new LGA Best Practice Guidance for Standards Committees.

The Committee are asked to review the report and offer and comment they may have.

Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. Note and comment on the report.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The report is to provide the Committee with an opportunity to comment on the proposal to create new best practice guidance.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Not applicable as this is just a discussion report.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Hoey Ainscough Associates (HAA) have been tasked by the Local Government Association (LGA) with looking into the possibility of creating new best practice guidance for Standards Committees.

- 3.2 As we have worked with HAA before they have approached Tower Hamlets, as well as selected other authorities, for any initial comment/thoughts we have in relation to the proposed guidance.
- 3.3 Should any guidance be created, the next stage would be for training material to be developed to work alongside the guidance.
- 3.4 At this stage it is just a scoping exercise and there are no set timescales for the development of the project.
- 3.5 Some early questions HAA have set are whether:
- the council has a 'stand alone' or combined standards committee (or indeed no committee overseeing standards),
 - what its composition is (does it reflect proportionality or has it been waived and does it have any co-opted members, is there an executive member if appropriate who leads on the issue)
 - what are its terms of reference
 - Where you have parish councils what if any relationship is there between the committee and its parishes (other than individual cases) and – Note – not applicable to Tower Hamlets.
 - any examples of good (or indeed bad!) practice you might have. We are particularly interested in the proactive role of promoting and maintaining high standards as opposed to the reactive complaint handling aspects.
- 3.6 The Committee are asked to consider this proposed work and consider whether there is any feedback it wishes to submit to HAA either on the points above or on any other relevant matter.
- 3.7 HAA have no specific deadline to complete their consideration of this project but hope to complete it in the summer of 2024.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None specific to this report but effective operation of the Standards Advisory Committee helps support all Members in their role including in relation to all equalities characteristics.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
 - Consultations,
 - Environmental (including air quality),
 - Risk Management,

- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

5.2 None specific to this report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 There are no financial implications of the Council providing comments on the creation of a new LGA Best Practice Guidance for Standards Committees.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 The Committee's functions include promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by the Mayor, Councillors and Co-opted Members of the Council as well as advising on the operation of the Code of Conduct for Members in light of best practice and changes in the law. It is therefore appropriate for the Committee to comment on this discussion report.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- None

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report


List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

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Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee Wednesday, 26 June 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Linda Walker, Interim Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Progress against relevant LGA Peer Review Actions	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, (Head of Democratic Services)
Wards affected	(All Wards);

Executive Summary

During the second half of 2023, the LGA undertook a Peer Review of the Council. The report and the Council’s initial action plan in response to the findings were published in December.

At its last meeting, the Standards Advisory Committee requested an update on progress against any actions which were relevant to the work of the Committee. This brief report sets those out for the Committee’s information and comment.

Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. Note and comment on the update.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 This report is presented at the request of the Committee in order for them to monitor actions that relate to the Committee’s areas of responsibility.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 None provided as the report is a discussion report presented at the request of the Committee.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Local Government Association (LGA) were invited in by the Council to conduct a Peer Review in the autumn of 2023. The main review took place in

September and the report, and the Council’s action plan in response were published in December.

3.2 The report had recommendations in a number of areas set out under the following headers:

- Strategic vision
- Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- Performance management
- Workforce strategy
- Mayor’s Office
- Internal governance
- Working with partners
- Grant allocation
- Transfer of property to third parties
- Cabinet Member responsibilities
- Membership of committees
- Member development
- Diversity
- Annual Governance Statement
- Outstanding accounts
- Organisational capacity
- Responsiveness
- ‘People First’

3.3 The full report and the Council’s response are available on the Council website at https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/council_and_democracy/Peer-Review-Feedback-report.aspx.

3.4 Whilst most of the Recommendations (and responses in the Council’s Action Plan) are the responsibility of the Executive or other Council Committees. There are a couple of actions that relate to the work of the Standards Advisory Committee and in particular its role supporting Member Learning and Development.

3.5 The table below shows the two LGA Recommendations with direct relevance to the work of the Standards Advisory Committee. Note that for Recommendation 13 only the actions relevant to this Committee are listed.

Peer Review Recommendation	Proposed Action	Progress/Activity
Recommendation 12: Member Development The existing member training and development	The existing member development programme for those in senior	The Member Learning and Development Programme is being expanded. Council agreed an increased budget in February 2024 to allow for funding to cover mentoring, coaching or other identified needs for individual Councillors. The new Individual Member Training Budgets were launched in May through the Member Bulletin and South-East Employers

<p>offer should be strengthened with support initially focussed on Cabinet members and committee chairs.</p>	<p>positions will be further developed to include opportunities of external mentoring.</p>	<p>recruited to support and manage the process. The groups are being asked to prioritise their key Members for this project.</p> <p>Once the types of mentoring each Member would like is identified through the PDP a potential mentor will be proposed and progressed. [Note - if a Member identifies a need for an alternative such as a coach then that will be progressed instead.]</p>
<p>Recommendation 13: Diversity - Given the composition of the ruling administration, consideration should be given to how the voices of women and those from different backgrounds are directly influencing policy through their lived experience. It is recommended that the council actively promote the LGA's 'Be a Councillor Campaign' to promote the opportunity for women and people from underrepresented groups across the borough.</p>	<p>Action in relation to the Be A Councillor campaign.</p>	<p>Whilst the above is progressing, officers are exploring options for mentors and others who may have particular skills/experience of value to our Members.</p> <p>An initial coaching pilot is now underway and the intention is to being similar mentoring pilots over the summer and build from there.</p> <p>The Council has run initial Be A Councillor information campaigns including creating an initial web page (https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgnl/council_and_democracy/Be-a-councillor.aspx) and advertising it through the website, town hall pop up banners, screens and similar.</p> <p>The council also ran a survey through May asking women to say if they were interested in standing and setting out what barriers may still exist to them working as a councillor. The survey results will be analysed in particular to see if the support the Council offers to Members should be enhanced in any way (for example around childcare, parental leave etc).</p> <p>The Council is also planning two in-person events to encourage people to consider standing for election. The first will be for women during the summer and then a second aimed at ethnic groups with low representation on the council during black history month.</p>

3.6 The Committee are asked to note and comment on the activities as set out above.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Be A Councillor Campaign in particular is looking to encourage a wide range of people to consider standing to be a councillor.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

5.2 None.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

6.1 The report requests that progress against the LGA Peer Review actions is noted. There are no financial implications from noting the report and implementation of the actions are being carried out within existing resources. Should additional resources be required these will need to be approved through the appropriate governance route.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

7.1 Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members of the authority.

7.2 Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits local authorities to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is incidental or conducive to, the discharge of their duties.

7.3 The matters set out in this report comply with the above legislation.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None.

Appendices

- None.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)**List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report**


List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- None.

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

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Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee Wednesday 26 June 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Linda Walker, Interim Director of Legal & Monitoring Officer	Classification: Unrestricted
Improving the Effectiveness of the Advisory Committee	

Originating Officer(s)	Linda Walker – Interim Director of Legal & Monitoring Officer
Wards affected	All Wards

Executive Summary

This report informs Members of proposed arrangements for improving the effectiveness of the Committee following discussions between the Chair and Vice Chair of the Advisory Committee, the Chief Executive and the Interim Monitoring Officer.

Recommendations:

1. The Advisory Committee is recommended to consider and note this report.

1. **REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 1.1 This is a noting report for consideration and discussion by the Advisory Committee.

2. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 N/A

3. **DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

- 3.1 In order to improve the effectiveness of the Advisory Committee, the Chief Executive and the Interim Monitoring Officer recognise there needs to be increased communication with the Advisory Committee on wider Council issues which directly or indirectly affect standards and ethical governance.
- 3.2 These will be reported to the Advisory Committee as appropriate and in addition a schedule of regular meetings will be arranged for the Chair, the

Chief Executive and the Interim Monitoring Officer to take place 3 times each year. Relevant media articles will also be flagged to the Chair and Advisory Committee Members.

3.3 Council wide issues currently directly or indirectly affecting standards and ethical governance are:

- The appointment of a new Director of Legal & Monitoring Officer. This process is currently underway and should be concluded in early July 2024. The new Director will have direct accountability to the Chief Executive on Monitoring Officer issues and will be part of the Corporate Management Team.
- Best Value Inspection (BVI). This was due to conclude by 31 May 2024, but has now been extended to 31 July 2024, to enable a review of the Council's arrangements for the general election and conclude certain outstanding issues. The BVI commenced in February this year and was not generally anticipated at the time. The focus of the BVI is not related to standards, but any standards or ethical governance issues identified as part of the BVI will be reported to the Committee.
- Review of the Constitution. The next meeting of the cross party Constitution Working Group will take place on 19 June 2024. The meeting will consider a review of the Constitution undertaken by the Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) which was completed in January 2024 and recommendations arising from the LGA Peer Review. The Standards Advisory Committee is identified as a potential area for further review, including the role of sub-committees, independent Members, advisors and the content of procedural rules.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None specific to this report.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

5.2 None specific to this report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 The increased communication with the Committee on wider Council issues which directly or indirectly affect standards and ethical governance, will be achieved through existing resources. Should any additional resources be required, these would need to be approved through the appropriate governance process.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Section 27(1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires a local authority to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority. The Advisory Committee is a key component in discharging this function.
- 7.2 Improving communication and providing information on wider Council issues directly or indirectly affecting standards and ethical governance issues should improve the operation and effectiveness of the Advisory Committee.
-

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

None

Appendices

None


Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended) List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

None

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

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Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee Wednesday, 26 June 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Linda Walker, Interim Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Standards Advisory Committee Annual Report to Council	

Originating Officer(s)	Jill Bayley, Head of Legal Safeguarding and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Wards affected	(All Wards);

Executive Summary

This report sets out the Committee’s annual report to Council. The report covers the activities of the Committee over the last year as well as being an opportunity to highlight any relevant issues to Council.

The Committee are asked to consider the draft Annual Report and feed back on any last updates before the report is presented to Council.

Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the activities of the Standards Advisory Committee for the municipal year May 2023 – May 2024 as set out in the Annual Report of the Standards Advisory Committee attached as Appendix 1.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 [It is considered best practice in many authorities for the full Council to receive an annual report in relation to the work of the Standards Advisory Committee and on issues around standards generally. The provision of an annual report of the Committee’s business ensures the profile of ethical standards across the organisation and affords the opportunity to highlight areas of good practice and identify any requirements for improvement.]

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Advisory Committee could decide not to submit an annual report but this course of action is not recommended.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Standards Advisory Committee is asked to consider the Annual Report attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The report contains an outline of the work and activities of the Standards Advisory Committee over the past year as well as highlighting any particular issues that Council should consider.
- 3.3 The Standards Advisory Committee is asked to note the list of topics for consideration over the next year and to advise whether any additional topics should be considered, and whether any of the topics should be given particular priority.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no immediate equalities implications arising out of this report.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
 - Consultations,
 - Environmental (including air quality),
 - Risk Management,
 - Crime Reduction,
 - Safeguarding.
 - Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.
- 5.2 Robust ethical governance arrangements help to ensure the proper, efficient and effective discharge of the Council's functions and contribute to compliance with the requirement to achieve best value.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no financial implications of noting the activities of the Standards Advisory Committee for the municipal year May 2023 – May 2024.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority. Section 28 of the same act requires local authorities to adopt a Code of Conduct which is consistent with the Nolan principles of standards in public life.

7.2 This report and the appendix demonstrate this local authority's compliance with the above legislation.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

Terms of reference report 2024/25 (please see earlier report on the agenda)

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – annual report to council.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

N/A

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London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Standards Advisory Committee - Annual Report to Council
Year May 2023 to May 2024

Introduction

1. This is the regular Annual Report of the Advisory Committee. It sets out the key issues dealt with by the Committee during the past municipal year and identifies the priorities for 2024/5.

Membership

2. During the municipal year 2023/24 the Committee comprised 5 elected members and 5 independent co-opted members. The Council's Constitution provides that an independent co-opted member be appointed Chair of the Committee.

Elected Members:

- Cllr. Sirajul Islam
- Cllr. Shafi Ahmed
- Cllr. Amin Rahman
- Cllr. Abu Chowdhury
- Cllr. Sabina Akhtar

Independent Co-opted Members

- John Pulford MBE (Chair)
- Fiona Browne (Vice Chair)
- Elizabeth Marshall MBE
- Mike Houston
- Faham Sinan-Katamba (appointed 27 September 2024)

Independent Persons

3. The Council has appointed two statutory Independent Persons (IPs) under the Localism Act 2011. The IPs are Ms Rachael Tiffen and Ms Amanda Orchard. Both were appointed to their current term of office as IP at Council on 19 January 2022. Ms Tiffen's second term of office and Ms Orchard's first term of office both started on 20 January 2022 and last until 20 January 2026.

4. The principal role of the IP is to give an independent view on governance issues in general and specifically in relation to alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct for Members. Both IP's work closely the Monitoring Officer and her Deputies, considering all complaints and whether an alleged breach of the Code meets the criteria for investigation.
5. It is also a statutory requirement to consult the IP before deciding on the outcome of an investigation into a complaint and whether to impose any sanction. The Member complained about may also at any stage of the process seek a view from the IP. In order to avoid any conflict of interest the Council has appointed two IPs.
6. The Council is fortunate to have appointed IPs with a sound understanding of the ethical framework who both act as advocates for the Council in promoting ethical standards and of high standards of conduct. Although not members of the Standards Advisory Committee, they attend meetings and play an important role in the proceedings. Both IPs also contribute to and participate in the Council's mandatory Ethics & Probity training programme.

Officers

7. The Committee's lead officers were:
 - Janet Fasan – Director, Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (to February 2024)
 - Linda Walker – Interim Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer (from February 2024)
 - Matthew Mannion – Head of Democratic Services and (from February 2024) Deputy Monitoring Officer
 - Jill Bayley - Head of Safeguarding and Deputy Monitoring Officer
 - Agnes Adrien – Head of Litigation and Deputy Monitoring Officer (to August 2023)

Terms of Reference

8. The current terms of reference for the Standards Advisory Committee are contained in Part B Section 19.18 of the Constitution, with the Committee's procedures set out in Part D. The terms of reference and procedures are attached as Appendix A to this report.

Meetings

9. The Standards Advisory Committee held four meetings during the 2023/24 municipal period on the following dates:
 - 22 June 2023

- 21 September 2023
 - 7 December 2023
 - A meeting was due to be held on 16 April 2024 but this had to be postponed and took place on 26 June 2024 and will therefore be reported on through the next annual report.
10. The Committee met in Committee Room 1 at the Town Hall with Members attending physically, although where attendance was not possible due to any specific urgent issues, Members were able to join virtually, providing a quorum attended physically.

Standards Advisory Committee Work Programme 2023/24

11. The Committee agreed a work programme at the first meeting of the municipal period on 22 June 2023. It was updated throughout the year. The key areas of business considered during the year are listed below.

Code of Conduct for Members – Complaint Monitoring:

12. The Committee received bi-annual monitoring reports on complaints of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct for Members. There were eleven complaints from May 2023 to May 2024.
13. Ten complaints were made by members of the public and one by an officer. Eight complaints were closed without investigation after consultation with the IP. One complaint is currently with the Monitoring Officer for a decision after full investigation. Two complaints are awaiting an initial response from the relevant Member. In addition, two complaints from the previous municipal year (2022/23) carried over into the year 2023/24. Both went to full investigation. In one, there was a finding that the Member was not acting as a Member at the time of the alleged incident. In this case, the complainant referred the matter to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman because of delays. The other matter has been closed after investigation with a finding of insufficient evidence to show that the Code of Conduct had been breached.
14. The Committee continues to monitor whether there are lessons to take from complaints monitoring. The Committee continues to monitor remedial actions and that outcomes are reported to the complainant, to give assurance that maintaining ethical standards is given full organisational support.

Dispensations:

15. The Committee received bi-annual reports on dispensations granted by the Monitoring Officer under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI's).

The meeting on 22 June 2023 noted that the Monitoring Officer had granted a continuing General Dispensation to all Members for their current four-year term to be present, speak and vote where they would otherwise have a DPI in the following matters:

- (a) Housing: where the Councillor (or spouse or partner) holds a tenancy or lease with the Council if the matter does not relate to the particular tenancy or lease of the Councillor (their spouse or partner);
- (b) Council Tax: setting the council tax or a precept;
- (c) Determining an allowance, travelling expense, payment or indemnity for Councillors;
- (d) Council Officer pay where this impacts on Member Allowances.

16. A specific dispensation may also be granted where the Monitoring Officer is satisfied that:

- (a) without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
- (b) without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business;
- (c) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area; or
- (d) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

Any grant of a dispensation must specify the duration of the dispensation up to a maximum of 4 years. The regular reporting to the Standards Advisory Committee allows Members to maintain oversight of any specific dispensations that are granted.

17. A specific Dispensation has been granted to specific Councillors, lasting for that Full Council meeting only, on one occasion during this municipal year.

18. A specific Dispensation was granted to specific Councillors for Full Council on 27 September 2023 for an Agenda Item regarding social housing in the borough. Two Councillors declared that they were Board Members of a relevant body. Six Councillors declared that they were tenants or leaseholders of a relevant body. One Councillor declared that a relative was a tenant or leaseholder of a relevant body. The Dispensation lasted for the Full Council meeting on 27 September 2023 only. The decision to grant the dispensation was made due to the significant number of Members who had a DPI because they had close connections to one of the relevant bodies:

- a) the representation of different political groups on the body conducting the business would be so upset as to alter the outcome of the vote on the matter; and
- b) Granting the dispensation would be in the interests of persons living within the authority's area; and
- c) The number of DPIs in the matter would impede the transaction of the business.

Gifts & Hospitality:

19. The Committee received quarterly reports on the requirement contained in the Code of Conduct to register gifts and hospitality received or declined with an estimated value of £25 or above.
20. In total 9 declarations were made within the reporting periods of the June 2023, September 2023, and December 2023 meetings.
21. During the year the Committee also monitored the speed of the declarations made, taking interest in whether declarations were made within the 28-day deadline. The Committee noted that one of the 9 declarations were made after the deadline and noted the reasons for the delay.
22. The Committee pays particular attention to any large donations received. The Committee would encourage all large gifts to be donated to the Speaker's Charity.
23. The Committee noted that acceptance of gifts and hospitality by councillors is not merely an administrative issue. Acceptance can impact on Member reputation and on the Council as a whole. Members need to show they are acting in the public interest and do not gain personally from receiving gifts.
24. The Committee received quarterly reports on the Register of Interests and noted that reminders were sent out to Members quarterly to update their Register of Interests.

Member Attendance

25. The Committee meeting in June 2023 received the annual report on Councillor and Co-optee attendance during the municipal year 2023-2024 at Council and Committee meetings. The report set out how attendance was recorded and provided details of attendance at meetings by the Mayor, Councillors and Co-optees.
26. It was noted that the Local Government Act 1972 currently forbids the holding of virtual council meetings. During the 2023-24 municipal year, council and committee meetings were held in a hybrid format. This allows members of committees to participate remotely in a committee meeting. However they do not count as present for quorum requirements and cannot vote.

Terms of Reference

27. At the meeting in June 2023 the Committee considered a report on the Committee's Terms of Reference. The existing Terms of Reference were agreed.

Member / Officer Relations Protocol

28. The updated Member / Officer Relations Protocol (the Protocol) was considered at the meeting in June 2023. It is closely connected to the Code of Conduct (the Code) and the Committee had agreed that, as the Code has been updated, the Protocol should be refreshed to reflect changes. The comments of Committee members were taken into account in the updated version.
29. The updated Protocol was approved at full Council on 15 November 2023.

Examples of Code of Conduct complaints from other Authorities

30. At the meeting on 21 September 2023 the Committee considered a report on Code of Conduct complaints from other Authorities, which included examples of complaints. The Committee noted the examples given.

Member Learning and Development Programme and the LGA Charter Mark

31. The December meeting of the Committee received the regular yearly report providing an update on the Member Learning and Development Programme listing events that had taken place since January 2023.
32. The report included details of member attendance at training.
33. In December 2022 a survey of members provided suggestions for training during the following year, which formed the basis for training during the year. The training provided covered Public Speaking, Chairing Skills, Managing Casework / Resident Issues, Community Leadership / Influencing / Engagement Skills, Dealing with abuse and intimidation, Computer Skills and Effective Scrutiny.
34. In addition to the training set out above, Members were encouraged to attend training provided by external providers such as the LGA.
35. In addition to the training provided for Members, get-togethers for Co-Optees took place on two occasions during 2023/4. The sessions focused on Ethics and Probity and gave the attendees a chance to network. Feedback from these sessions was positive.37. The Committee also received a separate report on the Council's plans to work towards achieving the LGA's Member Development Charter. Key benefits of achieving the Charter Mark (as stated by the LGA) include:
 - Councillor development needs are better understood and supported.
 - Demonstrates the value placed on councillors carrying out important, demanding and complex roles.
 - Councillors are more knowledgeable, skilled and effective.
 - Strengthens relationships with officers, residents and partners.

36. To support the work, the Council has established a Member Learning and Development Steering Group to oversee the project as well as Member Learning and Development more widely.
37. Achieving the Charter Mark will require the Council to demonstrate the effectiveness of its Member Training Programme to external assessors. It will also require the Council to undertake related work such as running a 'Be a Councillor' campaign in conjunction with the LGA's own work in that area. Support for young people such as through the Young Mayor programme will 38. The report set out that a key aim of the project was to develop a much more personalised training programme. General training for all councillors on issues such as Ethics and Probity or Committee Specific training are important but it is also vital to focus on the unique needs of each individual Councillor. To that end, Individual Member Training Budgets were being developed and these, linked to new Role Profiles and Personal Development Plans, would help guide provision of training options for all interested Councillors.
38. The report noted that Member Learning and Development had a £15k budget to support the training programme. However, the Committee are pleased to see that this has since been increased (at Budget Council) to £60k to better support Individual Member Training Budgets.
39. The Committee welcomed the project and asked that it be kept up to date on its progress and that it be brought in to discuss the work when appropriate.
40. For 2024/25 it was expected that individualised training developed as part of the Charter Mark project would be key as well as any priorities identified through the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (whose final report was expected shortly).
41. A further event which had been identified was a repeat of the 'Speed Dating' evening which was one of the key sessions from the Member Induction Programme in 2022.
42. This will allow small groups of Members to meet key officers within each Directorate's Leadership Team and discuss priority issues within directorates.

Annual review of the Code of Conduct

43. This will be considered at the meeting in May 2024 and will be reported on in the next Annual Report.

Standards Advisory Committee Work Planning for 2024-25

44. The Committee intends to undertake a substantial work programme during 2024-25, including looking at the following items.

- Bi-annual monitoring of complaints of alleged breach of the Code of Conduct for Members.
 - Quarterly monitoring of gifts and hospitality registered.
 - Bi-annual reports on DPI dispensations.
 - Review of the Constitution
 - Members' training programme
 - Review of the Committee's Terms of Reference and procedures
 - Monitoring of DPIs
 - News on ethics matters elsewhere including areas such as good practice, case law, ombudsman and quasi-judicial proceedings and similar.
 - Members' attendance at meetings
 - Annual report to Council
 - Annual review of the Member Code of Conduct
 - Best practice guidance from the LGA for standards committees
45. The 2024/25 work programme aims to continue to embed behaviours that support the seven principles in public life described in the Nolan report, by encouraging Members to apply ethical standards in their day-to-day duties and to look at how these should influence their approach to discharging their responsibilities in their individual and collective capacities.

Conclusion

46. As Chair of the Committee I wish to thank my fellow committee members, the Independent Persons and the Monitoring Officer for their contributions to the Committee's business and their commitment to promoting and maintaining high standards of ethical conduct across the Council. I also wish to thank the officers of the Council for their work in supporting the Committee during the year.
47. I would particularly like to highlight how important it is that the Council has such dedicated co-opted Members who are active contributors to the Committee's discussions and have demonstrated commitment to the role of Standards in the authority. The involvement of co-opted Members should be considered as 'good governance'. We are ahead of many local authorities in this area.

John Pulford MBE

Independent Chair

Non-Executive Report of the: Standards Advisory Committee Wednesday, 26 June 2024	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Member Attendance Update 2023-24	

Originating Officer(s)	Matthew Mannion, (Head of Democratic Services)
Wards affected	All
Exempt information	This report and/or its appendices include information that has been exempted from publication as the Monitoring Officer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has deemed that the information meets the definition of a category of exempt information as set out in the Council’s Access to Information Rules; and • has deemed that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. <p>The exempt information is contained in Appendix 3.</p> <p>The exempt information falls into this category: 1. Information relating to an individual</p>

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on Member and Co-optee attendance at formal Council and Committee meetings.

Recommendations:

The Standards Advisory Committee is recommended to:

1. Review and comment on the attendance statistics of Members of the Council as set out in Appendices 1 and 2.
2. Consider the attendance record and mitigating information relating to co-opted members of the Advisory Committee as set out in paragraphs 3.11 and 3.12 and exempt Appendix 3 and determine the appropriate action to take in response.

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Council's Constitution states that the committee will receive a report at its first meeting of the new municipal year allowing it to review any mitigating factors and determine whether any action should be taken where a Co-opted Member fails to attend (in person) at least half of the ordinarily scheduled meetings in a municipal year.
- 1.2 This is also a noting report to enable the Committee to undertake its role monitoring Member behaviour in relation to the Code of Conduct by monitoring attendance of all members and co-optees in the past year.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The options are as set out in paragraph 3.14.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

Member attendance 2023/24

- 3.1 Councillors and Co-optees will attend a number of formal Council and Committee meetings as part of their different roles. The number of meetings will vary significantly depending on the role of each Member with some required to attend many Committees, whilst others may only be on Council.
- 3.2 Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a Member of a Local Authority to attend at least one meeting of that Authority within a six-month period, in order to avoid being disqualified as a Councillor.
- 3.3 This requirement can be overcome through a report to Council which can agree an extension for one or more Councillors for any appropriate reasons. Over the last year, no such extension has been granted.
- 3.4 Member attendance details are set out in the minutes to the meeting. They are also listed on the website under each meeting as well as being available through individual stats reports for each Councillor/Mayor/Co-optee.
- 3.5 A number of status indicators are used in relation to Member attendance:
- Expected – the Member is expected to attend this meeting (usually a meeting which has not yet taken place)
 - Present as Expected – the Member attended the meeting
 - Present as Expected, virtual – the Member attended the meeting virtually (note – see explanation below)
 - Present as Substitute – the Member attended as a substitute for the regular attendee

- In Attendance – the Member has attended a meeting where they are not on the Committee itself. This could be to give evidence/make a submission or simply to observe.
 - In Attendance, virtually – the Member has attended virtually a meeting where they are not on the Committee itself. This could be to give evidence/make a submission or simply to observe.
 - Apologies – apologies for absence were received on behalf of the Member either in advance or at the meeting
 - Absent – the Member did not attend and no apologies were received.
- 3.6 Virtual Attendance Note – the Local Government Act 1972 does not allow Members of Committees to formally join the meeting virtually. To be considered as formally present (and to be able to vote) a Member must be there in person.
- 3.7 A summary of Member attendance is set out in Appendix 1 to this report for the period May 2023 to May 2024. This period is chosen as it fits with the normal municipal year of a local authority. Detailed information on attendances of individual Councillors can be found on the Council’s website.
- 3.8 A summary of co-optee attendance is set out in the Appendix 2 to this report for the period May 2023 to May 2024.

Attendance of Standards Advisory Committee Co-optees 23/24

- 3.9 The Council’s Constitution states that Where a Co-opted Member fails to attend (in person) at least half of the ordinarily scheduled Committee/Sub-Committee meetings in a municipal year, the Committee/Sub-Committee on which they sit will receive a report at its first meeting of the new municipal year allowing it to review any mitigating factors and determine whether any action should be taken (including as a final option, recommendation for removal should that be considered appropriate) by Council or the Committee/Sub-Committee who originally appointed them to. This provision followed a recommendation by the Advisory Committee in 2022/23.
- 3.10 In the previous municipal year, 2023/24, the following co-opted members of the Advisory Committee failed to attend at least 50% of the scheduled meetings in person. Accordingly, the committee is asked to consider the submissions of the co-optees in person, before determining what, if any, action it wishes to take.
- 3.11 Mike Houston has attended no meetings in person or remotely. He has been absent at all three meetings in the past year.
- 3.12 Elizabeth Marshall has attended one meeting in person (33%); no meetings remotely and has been absent at two meetings (66%) in the past year.
- 3.13 Appendix 3 provides information that has been provided by the co-optees referred to above to the Committee, to assist it in reaching a decision regarding what action to take.

- 3.14 It is suggested the Committee may wish to consider from amongst the following actions as it feels appropriate for each co-opted member:
- That the person be provided with a written reminder regarding attendance expectation and/or
 - That the Committee reviews the attendance record in 6 months time to consider if it has sufficiently improved.
 - That the person be removed as a co-opted member of the committee/sub committee and instruct officers to make arrangements to fill the vacancy.
 - That no action be taken at the current time.
- Any other action the committee feels is appropriate.

- 3.15 The Advisory Committee will note that the scheduled April 2024 meeting was cancelled. Although attendance has been based on the remaining three meetings only, this may have impacted attendance for some members.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 A robust constitution and adherence to its provisions supports the work of all Members and ensures good governance at the authority..

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:

- Best Value Implications,
- Consultations,
- Environmental (including air quality),
- Risk Management,
- Crime Reduction,
- Safeguarding.
- Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment.

- 5.2 No other statutory implications have been identified.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 There are no financial implications from reviewing the attendance statistics and determining appropriate action in respect of attendance.

7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires Members to attend at least one relevant meeting of the Authority during any period of six months, unless the absence has been approved by the Authority before the end of the six month period. If no such approval has been given, a Member who has failed to attend ceases to be a member at the end of the six month period.

- 7.2 The Council's Constitution states at Part A Chapter 6 paragraph 12 that where a co-opted Member fails to attend at least half the ordinarily scheduled meetings of the relevant committee or sub-committee in a year, the committee or sub-committee on which they sit shall receive a report at the first meeting of the municipal year allowing it to review any mitigating factors and determine whether any action should be taken. This action may include a recommendation for removal.
- 7.3 Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members of the authority.
- 7.4 This report demonstrates the Council's compliance with the above legislation and the Council's constitution.
-

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Member attendance statistics 23/24
- Appendix 2 – Co-optee attendance statistics 23/24
- Appendix 3 (Exempt) – Information provided by co-opted members of the Advisory Committee.

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- None.

Officer contact details for documents:

Matthew Mannion, (Head of Democratic Services) or state N/A

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Appendix 1
Councillor Attendance 2023-24

Councillor	Expected	Present	Present %	Present, virtual	Present, virtual %	In attendance
<u>Councillor Abdal Ullah</u>	17	12	71%	0	0%	0
<u>Councillor Abdul Malik</u>	26	24	92%	0	0%	0
<u>Councillor Abdul Mannan</u>	42	35	83%	0	0%	1
<u>Councillor Abdul Wahid</u>	34	32	94%	0	0%	0
<u>Councillor Abu Chowdhury</u>	37	35	95%	0	0%	0
<u>Councillor Ahmodul Kabir</u>	34	29	85%	3	9%	0
<u>Councillor Ahmodur Khan</u>	42	41	98%	0	0%	1
<u>Councillor Amin Rahman</u>	21	20	95%	0	0%	1
<u>Councillor Amina Ali</u>	18	12	67%	4	22%	0
<u>Councillor Amy Lee</u>	26	15	58%	2	8%	0

Councillor	Expected	Present	Present %	Present, virtual	Present, virtual %	In attendance
<u>Councillor Ana Miah</u>	27	21	78%	0	0%	0
<u>Councillor Asma Begum</u>	16	12	75%	2	13%	0
<u>Councillor Asma Islam</u>	41	36	88%	0	0%	0
<u>Councillor Ayas Miah</u>	17	6	35%	3	18%	0
<u>Councillor Bellal Uddin</u>	21	19	90%	0	0%	1
<u>Councillor Bodrul Choudhury</u>	39	32	82%	1	3%	2
<u>Councillor Faroque Ahmed</u>	25	22	88%	1	4%	0
<u>Councillor Gulam Kibria Choudhury</u>	45	42	93%	1	2%	0
<u>Councillor Harun Miah</u>	16	15	94%	0	0%	0
<u>Councillor Iqbal Hossain</u>	47	47	100%	0	0%	1
<u>Councillor Jahed Choudhury</u>	14	14	100%	0	0%	1
<u>Councillor James King</u>	18	16	89%	0	0%	0

Councillor	Expected	Present	Present %	Present, virtual	Present, virtual %	In attendance
Councillor Kabir Ahmed	46	43	93%	0	0%	3
Councillor Kabir Hussain	28	25	89%	2	7%	0
Councillor Kamrul Hussain	19	18	95%	0	0%	1
Councillor Leelu Ahmed	21	18	86%	0	0%	0
Councillor Maisha Begum	32	21	66%	2	6%	0
Councillor Maium Talukdar	40	31	78%	0	0%	3
Councillor Marc Francis	36	31	86%	0	0%	0
Councillor Mohammad Chowdhury	18	15	83%	3	17%	0
Councillor Mufedah Bustin	18	15	83%	1	6%	0
Councillor Musthak Ahmed	29	25	86%	0	0%	2
Councillor Nathalie Bienfait	11	11	100%	0	0%	3
Councillor Ohid Ahmed	10	7	70%	1	10%	0

Councillor	Expected	Present	Present %	Present, virtual	Present, virtual %	In attendance
<u>Councillor Peter Golds</u>	23	21	91%	0	0%	2
<u>Councillor Rachel Blake</u>	20	13	65%	0	0%	0
<u>Councillor Rebaka Sultana</u>	21	20	95%	1	5%	0
<u>Councillor Sabina Akhtar</u>	32	29	91%	2	6%	0
<u>Councillor Sabina Khan</u>	27	15	56%	3	11%	0
<u>Councillor Saied Ahmed</u>	49	41	84%	2	4%	0
<u>Councillor Saif Uddin Khaled</u>	15	12	80%	0	0%	0
<u>Councillor Shafi Ahmed</u>	28	26	93%	0	0%	1
<u>Councillor Shahaveer Shubo Hussain</u>	35	31	89%	2	6%	0
<u>Councillor Sirajul Islam</u>	15	14	93%	1	7%	2
<u>Councillor Suluk Ahmed</u>	46	45	98%	0	0%	1
<u>Mayor Lutfur Rahman</u>	31	31	100%	0	0%	0

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Appendix 2
Co-opted members attendance 2023-24

Co-opted member	Body	Expected	Present	Present %	Present virtual	Present virtual %
Ashraf Zaman	Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee	5	2	40%	3	60%
Nafisa Ahmed	Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee	5	0	0%	2	40%
Shiblu Miah	Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee	5	3	60%	2	40%
Joanna Hannan	Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee	5	4	80%	0	0%
Dr Philip Rice	Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee	5	5	100%	0	0%
Jessica Chiu	Health & Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee	1	0	0%	0	0%
Assan Ali	Health & Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee	5	1	20%	2	40%
Mahbub Anam	Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee	5	5	100%	0	0%
Susanna Kow	Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee	5	4	80%	0	0%
Halima Islam	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	15	13	87%	0	0%
Jahid Ahmed	Overview & Scrutiny Committee	15	13	87%	0	0%

Co-opted member	Body	Expected	Present	Present %	Present virtual	Present virtual %
John Gray	Pensions Board	3	3	100%	0	0%
David Stephen Thompson	Pensions Board	3	3	100%	0	0%
John Pulford MBE	Standards Advisory Committee	3	3	100%	0	0%
Fiona Browne	Standards Advisory Committee	3	3	100%	0	0%
Elizabeth Marshall	Standards Advisory Committee	3	1	33%	0	0%
Mike Houston	Standards Advisory Committee	3	0	0%	0	0%
Faham Sinan-Katamba*	Standards Advisory Committee	1	0	0%	1	100%

Notes

Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report in May 2024 alerting to where co-opted Members had not attended (in person) at least half of the ordinarily scheduled Committee/SubCommittee meetings.

* Faham Sinan-Katamba* was appointed mid year and attended the September Standards Advisory Committee meeting in person as a guest. This attendance is not reflected above as it was before his formal appointment to the Advisory Committee.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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TOWER HAMLETS

STANDARDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN and ACTION LIST 2024/25

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Agenda Item 6

Contact Officer:	Joel West Democratic Services joel.west@towerhamlets.gov.uk
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ACTIONS LIST

Action number	Title	Action Owner	Originating Meeting/Item	Due Date / Comment
1.	Public webpage on standards in public life	Matthew Mannion	March 2024	To consider a proposal for a dedicated Council webpage on good standards in public life and what that means. Now scheduled for 18 September 2024 meeting.
2.	LGA Consultation on best practice guidance for standards committees	Matthew Mannion	April 2024	To determine a response to the LGA consultation following a request to the MO from Hoey Ainscough Associates Ltd. Included on the agenda for this meeting.
3.	Annual Report to Council	To review the draft Annual Report to Council	March 2024	Originally listed for March 2024 in 2023/24 work plan. Included on the agenda for this meeting.
4.	Annual Review of the Code of Conduct	To conduct the annual review of the Council's code of conduct for Members	March 2024	Originally listed for March 2024 in 2023/24 work plan. Now scheduled for 18 September 2024 meeting.
5.	Register of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Declarations Update	Quarterly update report	March 2024	Originally listed for March 2024 in 2023/24 work plan. Included on the agenda for this meeting.
6.	Code of Conduct for Members – Complaint Monitoring and Associated Matters	6-monthly update report	March 2024	Originally listed for March 2024 in 2023/24 work plan. Included on the agenda for this meeting.
7.	LGA Peer Review feedback	To provide an update on Peer Review feedback and implementation	March 2024	Originally listed for March 2024 in 2023/24 work plan. Included on the agenda for this meeting.

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N.B. once concluded - actions should remain on the list marked 'complete' for the remainder of the municipal year.

WORK PLAN

REPORT TITLE	BRIEF SUMMARY	LEAD OFFICER	OTHER CTTEE MEETINGS
26 JUNE 2024			
1. Annual Administrative Reports	To note the Committee's terms of reference, membership and meetings for 24-25.	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services	
2. Attendance 23/24	Report on Member attendance for the previous year and to note any co-opted members of the Advisory Committee whose attendance in 2023/24 was below the expected threshold and decide appropriate action.	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services	
3. Register of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Declarations Update	Quarterly update report	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services	
4. Dispensations under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011	6-monthly update on any dispensations granted under the Act and any related matters.	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	
5. LGA Consultation on best practice guidance for standards committees	Update on the proposed creation of new LGA Best Practice Guidance for Standards Committees.	Matthew Mannion	
6. Annual Report to Council	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	
7. Code of Conduct for Members – Complaint Monitoring and Associated Matters	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	

SAC WORK PLAN 2024/25

REPORT TITLE	BRIEF SUMMARY	LEAD OFFICER	OTHER CTTEE MEETINGS
8. LGA Peer Review feedback	To provide an update on Peer Review feedback and implementation	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	
9. Effectiveness of work of SAC	To provide an update on work to address improvement initiatives for the Advisory Committee.	Mark Norman, Legal Officer	

SAC WORK PLAN 2024/25

18 SEPTEMBER 2024			
1. Register of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Declarations Update	Quarterly update report	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services	
2. Code of Conduct for Members – Complaint Monitoring and Associated Matters	6-monthly update report	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	
3. Public webpage on standards in public life	To consider a proposal for a dedicated Council webpage on good standards in public life and what that means.	Matthew Mannion	
4. Annual Review of the Code of Conduct	To conduct the annual review of the Council's code of conduct for Members	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	

SAC WORK PLAN 2024/25

16 JANUARY 2025			
1. Register of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Declarations Update	Quarterly update report	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services	
2. Dispensations under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011	6-monthly update on any dispensations granted under the Act and any related matters.	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	
3. LGA Member Learning and Development Charter	Update on work done and planned to achieve the Charter.	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services	
4. Annual Report on Member Training	To present the annual report, to include lessons and feedback from Co-opted member training sessions.	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services	

SAC WORK PLAN 2024/25

3 APRIL 2025			
1. Annual Report to Council	To review the draft Annual Report to Council	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	Council 14 May 2025
2. Annual Review of the Code of Conduct	To conduct the annual review of the Council's code of conduct for Members	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	
3. Register of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality Declarations Update	Quarterly update report	Matthew Mannion, Head of Democratic Services	
4. Code of Conduct for Members – Complaint Monitoring and Associated Matters	6-monthly update report	Linda Walker, Director of Legal and Monitoring Officer	

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