

Non-Executive Report of the: Council Wednesday, 18 November 2020	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Corporate Director, Governance and Monitoring Officer	Classification: Open (Unrestricted)
Annual Report of the Standards Advisory Committee 2019-20	

Originating Officer(s)	Janet Fasan – Divisional Director, Legal Services Matthew Mannion – Head of Democratic Services
Wards affected	All Wards

Executive Summary

To this cover report is attached the Standards Advisory Committee's Annual Report to Council.

It is considered best practice for Council to receive an annual report in relation to standards. The provision of an annual report highlights the importance Council places on the profile of ethical standards across the organisation and affords the opportunity to highlight areas of good practice and identify any requirements for improvement.

Recommendation:

The Council is recommended to:

1. Consider and note the Standards Advisory Committee's Annual Report.

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 standards. The provision of an annual report of the Committee's business will increase 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 Council can make such comment as it sees fit in relation to the Annual Report.

3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 The Standards Advisory Committee, at its meeting on Thursday 30 July 2020 considered its draft Annual Report. The Committee agreed that it be presented to Council and so Council is now asked to review and note the report.
- 3.2 It is in line with best practice Council consider such an annual report covering the work of the Independent Persons and the Standards Advisory Committee.
- 3.3 This Annual Report sets out the key issues dealt with by the Committee during the past municipal year and identifies the priorities for 2020/21.
- 3.4 The Annual Report is set out at Appendix 1 to this Cover Report.
- 3.5 The Committee have also asked that Council's attention be drawn to a number of other specific matters:
- The report presented to the Committee at its meeting held on 15 October 2020 setting out work to meet the recommendations of the recent report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life. This report is reproduced as Appendix 2 to this Cover Report.
 - A background briefing note circulated to all Members setting out the legal implications of the recent 'Holborn Studios' case which impacts on how Members should deal with submissions received in relation to planning applications.
 - The Committee's workplan for 2020/21 as presented to the Committee on 15 October 2020 is attached as Appendix 3 to this report. Note that the Committee will continue to update its workplan as the year progresses.

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.

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 immediate financial implications resulting from this report.

7. LEGAL COMMENTS

7.1 The principal statutory provisions relating to standards of conduct for Members 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

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Annual Report to Council
- Appendix 2 – Council response to the CSPL review into the Code of Conduct
- Appendix 3 – Committee Workplan 2020-21

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