


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.
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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