

STANDARDS COMMITTEE
26 FEBRUARY 2013

(19:15 to 20:05)

PRESENT: Councillors Peter McCabe (in the Chair), John Dehaney, Karin Forbes, Janice Howard, Philip Jones, Oonagh Moulton and Rod Scott.

Co-opted members: Nigel Brotherton and Beverley Huie.

Fiona Thomsen (Deputy Monitoring Officer, Head of Shared Legal Services), Margaret Culleton (Head of Audit), Karin Lane (Head of Information Governance), Colin Millar (Democracy Services).

ALSO PRESENT: Derek Prior (Independent Person)

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda item 1)

None were made

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda item 2)

None were given

3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 OCTOBER 2012 (Agenda item 3)

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2012 are agreed as a correct record.

4 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2011/12 – IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE (Agenda item 4)

Members asked for their concern at the number of dates which had been revised to be pointed out to the relevant officers.

The report was otherwise NOTED.

5 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT – AUTHORISATIONS (Agenda item 5)

Karin Lane said that she would obtain and pass to members comparison data with other authorities.

The report was otherwise NOTED

6 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT (Agenda item 6)

Members asked for numbers indicating the proportion of upheld complaints by department to be included in future reports.

Karin Lane said that our performance compared to other London local authorities had improved markedly. She would obtain the precise information and pass it on to members.

The report was otherwise NOTED.

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7 THE MAYOR OF MERTON'S CHARITABLE TRUST – UPDATE
(Agenda item 7)

Fiona Thomsen said she would look further into the questions of liability and insurance cover and respond to Councillor Scott. directly.

The report was otherwise NOTED.

8 APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS OF THE STANDARDS
COMMITTEE (Agenda item 8)

RESOLVED: That Councillors Philip Jones, Karin Forbes and either of Janice Howard or Oonagh Moulton are appointed to the panel to be chaired by Nigel Brotherton.

9 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS (Agenda item 9)

RESOLVED: That the Standards Committee has no comments for the Council on the proposed amendments.

10 PROTOCOL ON GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY FOR ELECTED MEMBERS
(Agenda item 10)

It was agreed to make the following amendments:

Page 36 of the report – section “Must I register...” last bullet point add the words “since this will protect your position and that of the Council”

Page 37 of the report – section “What is the value....” Add final sentence “If you are uncertain of the value you are advised to register the gift and make an approximation of the value.”

Page 38 of the report – section “Gifts which are more likely....” last bullet point add at end “(You may wish to pass these on to the Mayor’s Charity)”

RESOLVED: That the protocol on gifts and hospitality for members is agreed as amended above.

11 COMPLAINTS AGAINST MEMBERS – (NO REPORT) (Agenda item 11)

Nothing to report

12 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda item 12)

Noted