

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Meeting: 3 March 2022

At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

In the chair; Mr Stephen Clarke (Independent Member), Ms Julie Carter (Independent Member), Andrew Stewart (Independent Member), Councillors Malcolm Allan, Brian Bagnall, Anna Charles-Jones, Charlie Stewart and Val Cottam (Independent Person).

1. MINUTES

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 5 July 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors and Officers were invited to declare any interests which they may have had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations of interest were made.

3. URGENT DECISIONS

No urgent decisions were reported.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No public questions were submitted.

5. GENERAL DISPENSATIONS FOR COUNCILLORS

The Strategic Head of Service and Monitoring Officer submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which considered what general dispensations ought to be granted to councillors to allow them to participate in council business where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest or personal and prejudicial interest that might otherwise preclude them from consideration of particular decisions.

The following comments were made/issues raised:

- The Monitoring Officer clarified that this report was in relation to dispensations and whether they should be granted for a further four years. There was also a further clarification paragraph which related to the Mayoral Development Corporation and that the dispensations required for the Mayoral Development Corporation were not covered in this report.
- In response to a Member question, the Monitoring Officer clarified that the school governors mentioned in the report referred to all types of governors.

- 1.1. RESOLVED - That the Standards Committee grant the following dispensations to all councillors to allow them to participate at Council Meeting and Council committees:-

Nature of Interest	Dispensation	Exemptions or qualifications	Duration
As recipients of an allowance under the Members' Allowance Scheme	to enable decisions regarding any allowance, payment or indemnity given to members		Until February 2026
As a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or as a parent governor of a school	to enable decisions regarding school meals or school transport and travelling expenses	that the decision/ matter under consideration does not relate particularly to the school at which the councillor's child attends	Until February 2026
As tenants of the authority	To enable councillors to make decisions regarding Council housing	that the matter under consideration does not relate particularly to that councillor's tenancy or lease	Until February 2026
As property owners or those eligible to pay Council Tax	To enable councillors to make decisions regarding Council tax precepts and the Council Tax Discount and Support Scheme		Until February 2026
Any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Personal and Prejudicial Interest in any item forming part of the budget setting process being considered at the Budget Council Meeting only	To enable councillors to participate in these items.		Until February 2026

6. LGA MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCILLORS

The Strategic Head of Service and Monitoring Officer submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which updated the Standards Committee on the current position regarding the LGA's Model Code of Conduct for Councillors, the guidance that has been

issued to support the Model in order to assist the Standards Committee in deciding whether it wishes to recommend the adoption of the LGA Model Code to the Council.

The following comments were made/issues raised:

- The Monitoring Officer confirmed that an additional table would be added into the Interests section of the report to further clarify the situation.
- The Monitoring Officer sought clarification as to whether Standards Committee would like to retain what was previously called the Local Code in relation to interests where personal and prejudicial interests would be retained.
- The Monitoring Officer highlighted that this remained a voluntary code.
- Members considered that the LGA Model Code of Conduct was an improvement on what was already there and as such should be adopted.
- Members raised the issue of training and reviews. The Monitoring Officer suggested a briefing of the document at the scrutiny stage of the governance process. If the document is adopted, training would then be undertaken and it was agreed that Members of the Standards Committee would be able to take part in this training.

RESOLVED – That Standards Committee recommend to the Constitution Working Party that the new Model of Conduct be adopted.

The meeting closed at 6.15 pm