

# Minutes of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee

25<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 3.00pm

- Present:** Councillor Ahmed (Vice Chair);  
Councillors Bostan, Dhallu, Hevican, Horton, P Hughes and Mabena.
- Observers:** Mr John Tew and Mr Richard Phillips (Independent Persons).
- Officers:** Surjit Tour – Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer; Elaine Newsome – Service Manager – Democracy; Trisha Newton – Senior Democratic Services Officer.

## 34/20 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Simms.

## 35/20 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

With regard to the update on complaints and timelines, the Committee requested an additional meeting.

**Agreed** that an additional meeting of the Committee be scheduled in relation to an update on outstanding complaints.

## 36/20 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were declared.



37/20 **Matter of Urgency**

There were no additional items of business to consider.

38/20 **Appointment of Sub Committees**

The Localism Act 2011 required authorities to adopt arrangements for dealing with complaints about breaches of the Member Code of Conduct. The Council's arrangements for dealing with complaints provided for a Sub-Committee of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee to consider investigation reports referred to it by the Monitoring Officer and to conduct hearings (including the imposition of sanctions).

The Council at its annual meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019 agreed the membership of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee. As two vacancies had arisen, the Emergency Committee gave approval to the appointment of two additional members to the Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020. The Committee gave consideration to the appointments to the Ethical Standards Sub Committees for the remainder of the municipal year.

Concern was expressed that appointments to the Committee had been approved by the Emergency Committee and not full Council.

The Committee also reviewed the members appointed to the Standards Working Group and the Member Development Working Group, alongside the Vice Chair, for the remainder of the municipal year.

**Agreed that:-**

- (1) the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee appoints to two Ethical Standards Sub-Committees for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year, with flexibility between membership to cater for availability and workload, with delegated powers to carry out the functions set out in the following terms of reference, and with the membership set out below:

**Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee**  
**25<sup>th</sup> September, 2020**

Terms of reference of the Ethical Standards Sub Committee

- To consider investigation reports referred to it by the Monitoring Officer.
- To conduct hearings (including the imposition of sanctions).

Membership

<b>SUB-COMMITTEE 1</b>		<b>SUB-COMMITTEE 2</b>	
Member	Substitute	Member	Substitute
Ahmed	Substitute members taken from remainder of committee	Ahmed	Substitute members taken from remainder of committee
Hevican		P Hughes	
Bostan		Mabena	
Simms		Dhallu	
Horton		Hevican	
+ Independent Person		+ Independent Person	

- (2) that the Standards Working Group membership be amended to include Councillor Bostan for the remainder of the municipal year;
- (3) that Councillors Ahmed, Hevican, P Hughes and Mabena be appointed to the Member Development Working Group for the remainder of the municipal year.

39/20

**Committee on Standards in Public Life – Annual Report**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020, the Committee on Standards in Public Life published its annual report for 2019-20.

Within its terms of reference, the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee had a duty to promote high ethical standards amongst Members. As well as complying with legislation and guidance, the Committee needed to demonstrate learning from issues arising from local investigations and case law.

Furthermore, it was advisable for the Committee to be kept informed of any issues arising out of the Annual Report from the Committee on Standards in Public Life as they may add to learning at the local level.

Any identified recommendations arising from the annual report would be included as part of the review being undertaken by the Standards Working Group.

40/20 **Gifts and Hospitality**

No new entries had been made to the Gifts and Hospitality Register since the last meeting of the Committee.

41/20 **National Cases**

The Committee received and discussed details of national cases relating to a councillor who had voted on a council tax increase despite being in arrears and a councillor who had been cleared of breaching the code of conduct after publishing a confidential agenda on line.

42/20 **Allegations Update**

The Committee received details of complaints received in relation to member conduct and the progress on the complaints.

Meeting ended at 3.41pm.