

# STANDARDS COMMITTEE

## Wednesday, 26 June 2019

**PRESENT** – Councillors; Afzal, Davies, Fletcher, Gunn, Hussain, Rigby, Slater and Whittle.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** – Tassadaq Hussain and Paul Fletcher  
(Independent Members)

**OFFICERS** - David Fairclough (Director of HR, Legal and Governance) and Graham Fawcett (Lead HR Consultant)

### RESOLUTIONS

#### 7 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Alan Eastwood (Independent Person), Stewart Wright (Independent Person), Daniel Wilde (Parish Councillor), Councillors Jim Casey, Tasleem Fazal and Vicky McGurk.

#### 8 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019, be agreed as a correct record.

#### 9 **Declarations of Interest**

No Declarations of Interest were submitted.

#### 10 **Update on Register of Interests Forms**

David Fairclough reported to the Committee that there were currently 20 Register of Interest forms outstanding. It was resolved that David as Monitoring Officer remind Members of their obligations and also identify for group leaders those Members who had not yet completed their forms. David was asked to ensure Members were advised to submit their forms by the end of the week and provide an update to the Committee at its next meeting.

Discussions took place around electronic Register of Interests, particularly to save having to complete a hard copy each year. David Fairclough confirmed that this was currently being looked into and that the Committee would be updated in due course.

#### 11 **Members Training & Induction 2019/20**

A report was submitted seeking Member's consideration for the Member Training & Induction Programme for 2019/20.

Members received a demonstration on the MeLearning e-learning solution and resolved that going forward most elected Member training would be via the e-learning portal. There were over 200 courses to access on the portal, with some specifically designed for elected Members.

An Annual Governance Training course which would be specifically aimed at newly Elected Members was currently in the draft stages with the following courses also on the horizon for Members and staff; Civil Contingencies, Health and Safety and using MyView.

The Committee was informed that not all Members had enrolled on the portal; only 25 out of 51 were registered. It was agreed that all Members should be encouraged to enrol with immediate effect, and that the Independent Members of the Standards Committee should also have access to the e-learning portal.

The Committee confirmed that of the courses available, the Information Governance (GDPR) course should be mandatory and that Members would have until the end of August to complete this course. A report would be prepared for the next meeting, informing the Committee of which Members had undertaken the course and a report would follow in six months' time reviewing what was / wasn't working for Members.

Whilst it was agreed that the digital training platform should be utilised for Member training, the Committee also confirmed that 4 face-to-face Strategic Development Sessions would remain. These were approved as follows:

- September 2019 - Corporate Parenting
- November 2019 - Adult Safeguarding
- January 2020 - Local Government Finance
- March 2020 - Equality & Inclusion

#### **RESOLVED –**

- Members note the presentation on the MeLearning e-learning solution and confirmed the move to e-training and note the selection of courses available
- That Members identify any additional areas / courses that they would like to see covered / developed for the platform and feedback during the year
- Agreement to the 2019 programme for Strategic Development Sessions for all Members

#### **12 Review of DBS Procedures - Councillors**

The Committee received a report to consider proposals for a Disclosure and Barring Service Policy for Councillors.

In January the Committee considered a detailed report on the arrangements for the potential undertaking of police checks which were facilitated by the Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS). The Committee submitted recommendations to Council Forum, which were approved on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

Members of the Committee considered the draft policy attached within the main report, and in addition a draft letter which would be sent to all Councillors

in the event that the draft policy was approved by Full Council, along with an FAQ document which would be issued with the letter.

**RESOLVED –**

That the Committee agree the Disclosure and Barring Policy for Councillors for recommendation for Adoption by the Council Forum on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019; and

**13 Complaints Update**

Members received an update on complaints received regarding Members conduct under the Arrangements for dealing with complaints about the Code of Conduct for Members.

Members were advised that a letter of complaint was received in respect of a Councillor. Further details were requested by the Monitoring Officer alongside the completion of a complaints form, however no completed form had been returned since the original letter had been received.

The Committee was advised that between Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019 there had been no complaints received under the Members Complaints Procedures.

**RESOLVED –** That the report be noted.

**14 Work Programme 2019/20**

The Committee considered its priorities for a work programme for meetings in 2019/20. The Committee identified key areas that it would wish to review over the forthcoming meetings, these were identified as follows;

Members of the Committee indicated they would wish to hold a training session covering Equality and Inclusion. The Committee was keen to assist with the design of the training session and having an input from a Members perspective, with matters being covered that were important to them but felt that a professional within that field could provide guidance and help shape out the session. It was agreed that David Fairclough would arrange for someone to come along to the meeting in October 2019, to discuss this further.

Members of the Committee felt that a review of the MeLearning online Training Programme for Members was also appropriate in due course, so that they could identify what was working well or otherwise, and to report back on any issues. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the January 2020 meeting.

Members expressed concerns with the use of social media and proposed to use the meeting scheduled for March 2020 to discuss Social Media Guidance for Members.

Members of the Committee also discussed the conduct of Members at Council meetings and indicated that they would wish for Members to be reminded of the standards of behaviour expected of them. It was agreed that the Monitoring Officer be asked to write to Members reminding them of this.

**RESOLVED – That the work programme for 2019/20 be as follows:**

1. 23 October 2019 – Developing Strategic Member Development Session – Equality & Inclusion hold a workshop
2. 15 January 2020 – Review of Training Programme for Members
3. 4 March 2020 – Review of Social Media Guidance for Elected Members

It was also agreed that;

4. The Monitoring Officer write to all Members, reminding them of the standards of behaviour expected at Council meetings, within the Council Chamber.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Chair of the meeting  
at which the minutes were confirmed