

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER, 2017, 7.00 - 8.10 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Kaushika Amin (Chair), Stuart McNamara, Felicia Opoku, Lorna Reith and Clive Carter

25. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair drew attendees' attention to the notice on the agenda regarding filming at meetings.

26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Beacham, for whom Cllr Carter attended as a substitute.

27. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

28. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

29. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 14 September were agreed.

30. UPDATE ON WORK PROGRAMME - PROCEDURE RULES AND MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The Committee received an update from Michael Kay, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager, on the work initiated by the Committee to consider the Council's procedure rules, the Protocol on Member-Officer Relations and the scheme of Members' allowances.

After a discussion of whether the structure of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution ought to be revised to better set out the procedure rules contained therein, the Committee agreed that it would be preferable to not undertake an exercise of restructuring the rules at this stage, but that the Committee should be presented with proposed amendments to improve the rules within the existing structure.

In a related discussion, Councillors noted that the proposed relocation of Committee meetings in the next municipal year was intended to provide greater opportunities for broadcasting of meetings.

On the Member-Officer Protocol, Members considered a draft developed following the structures and content agreed at the September meeting. Members noted that it had not yet been discussed by senior officers within the Council, which may lead to some small changes.

Members agreed that it would be helpful if the draft referred explicitly to the relationship with Homes for Haringey officers, and to the statutory role of the Director of Children's services and the Cabinet Member.

Members agreed that it was helpful for the protocol to provide clarity for both Members and Officers on appropriate relations. It was suggested that other boroughs' equivalent Protocols should be reviewed to see if there were arrangements in place for resolving concerns or grievances with the Head of Paid Service, aside from the referral to the Monitoring Officer outlined in the present draft.

Members agreed that, further to comments made, the document should now be presented in an all-Member briefing.

On the Members' Allowances Scheme, there was a discussion of whether it was helpful to have such a review given the forthcoming Council elections and the expectation of further guidance from the Independent Panel on the Remuneration of Councillors in London. Members agreed that it was necessary to have this review, given it was often deferred and this would be as good a time as possible to agree any needed changes.

Members noted that some boroughs offered an allowance for group leaders based on the size of their group, based on a mixture of fixed allowance and a per-member figure. This would help accommodate any possible third group returned at the forthcoming election. Members asked that that be considered further, to be discussed at the next meeting.

It was agreed that the changes agreed by the Committee should be incorporated into a new Allowances scheme, which would then be briefed to Members.

AGREED

That work continue to review the Constitution's Procedure rules

That the finalised draft Member-Officer Protocol be briefed to Members

That :

- the Opposition Leader should move from Band 3B to Band 2B
- the Opposition Whip, Deputy Leader and Chair of Corporate Committee should move from Band 2B to Band 1
- a new allowance be created for the Vice Chair of Regulatory in Band 1

- the statutory co-optees currently offered an allowance should be offered it on a per-meeting basis, to a maximum
- Cabinet Advisers ought not receive an allowance
- the Dependents' Carer's Allowance should be offered the London Living Wage

31. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

32. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Noted.

CHAIR: Councillor Kaushika Amin

Signed by Chair

Date