

STANDARDS COMMITTEE
Friday, 3 May 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held at Committee Room - 2nd
Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 3 May 2019 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Caroline Addy
Randall Anderson
Judith Barnes
Henry Colthurst
Nick Cooke
Mary Durcan
Ann Holmes
Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Alderman Susan Langley
Dan Large
Vivienne Littlechild MBE
Deputy Edward Lord
Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli
Barbara Newman
Jeremy Simons

Officers:

Lorraine Brook	- Town Clerk's Department
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor
Edward Wood	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Chandni Tanna	- Media Officer

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN
RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. **ORDER OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL**

The Committee received the Order of the Court of Common Council of 25 April 2019 (separately circulated and tabled at the meeting) appointing the Committee and setting its terms of reference for the ensuing year.

RECEIVED.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29.

A list of Members eligible to stand was read and, with both Ann Holmes and Barbara Newman expressing willingness to serve, a ballot was held.

Votes were cast as follows:	Ann Holmes	–	7 votes
	Barbara Newman	–	5 votes

Ann Holmes was therefore duly elected Chairman for the ensuing year and took the Chair. The Chairman thanked the Committee for their support.

VOTE OF THANKS

Proposed by Barbara Newman;
Seconded unanimously;

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

That the Members of the Standards Committee wish to place on record their sincere appreciation to

Oliver Arthur Wynlayne Lodge

for the courteous and conscientious manner in which he has carried out the duties of Chairman of this Committee since May 2016 and the leadership he has shown in steering it through a significant period of change over the past three years.

SOON after his appointment as Chairman, the decision to commission an independent review of the City Corporation's standards framework was taken in an attempt to re-establish the standing of the Standards Committee in the Court. This review resulted in a number of recommendations with those that were carried altering the composition of the Committee, the role of its Independent Persons and the way in which it handles complaints. A revised Code of Conduct and Guidance to Members came into effect in March 2018.

MORE recently, Mr Lodge oversaw a revision to the organisation's Dispensations Policy and Guidance, with a view to providing an enhanced level of consistency, of requisite information about disclosable pecuniary interests and of the regulations around such interests and dispensations. The new requirements came into effect as of 1st March 2019.

THE Committee also examined how best to promote greater transparency and consistency in terms of both elected and Co-opted Members' Declarations of Interest. Through the Chairman's persistence in this matter, the declarations of all necessary Co-opted Members are now published on the City Corporation's webpages alongside those of Elected Members and have been publicly available since March 2019.

IN taking their leave of their Chairman, his colleagues are united in conveying to Oliver Lodge their thanks for the contribution he has made to their deliberations and wish him every possible success in the future.

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk be authorised to make arrangements for the resolution to be presented in a manner agreeable to the past Chairman.

5. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 30.

A list of Members eligible to stand was read and, with Caroline Addy, Mary Durcan and Barbara Newman expressing willingness to serve, a ballot was held.

Votes were cast as follows:	Caroline Addy	–	8 votes
	Mary Durcan	–	3 votes
	Barbara Newman	–	1 vote

Caroline Addy was therefore duly elected Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year and took the Chair.

The Chairman took the opportunity to give thanks to those other Members who had now left the Committee – Christopher Boden, Deputy Kevin Everett, Alderman David Graves, Mark Greenburgh, Michael Hudson and Oliver Sells, QC. She went on to welcome those Members who were newly appointed to the Committee – Randall Anderson, Henry Colthurst, Nicholas Cooke, QC, Mary Durcan, Alderman Susan Langley, Vivienne Littlechild and Barbara Newman.

6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The public minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2019 were considered and approved as a correct record.

MATTERS ARISING

Election of Deputy Chairman of Dispensations Sub Committee (page 11) – The Town Clerk reported that, following the resignation of Mark Greenburgh, there was a vacancy for one of the two Deputy Chairmen of the Dispensations Sub Committee. The Town Clerk reported that expressions of interest had been received from both Henry Colthurst and Randall Anderson to fill the position and that a ballot was therefore necessary.

Randall Anderson indicated that he wished to withdraw at this stage. Henry Colthurst was therefore appointed as one of the two Deputy Chairmen of the Dispensations Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

RESOLVED – That, being the only Member expressing a willingness to serve, Henry Colthurst be appointed as one of the two Deputy Chairmen of the Dispensations Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

7. **MINUTES OF HEARING SUB (STANDARDS) AND DISPENSATIONS SUB COMMITTEES**

The public minutes of the Hearing Sub (Standards) Committee meeting held on 1 March 2019 and the public minutes of the Dispensations Sub (Standards) Committee meetings held on 1 February 2019 and 1 April 2019 were received.

The Chairman clarified that a further Hearing date relating to the case covered at the 1 March 2019 meeting of the Hearing Sub Committee was still to be confirmed. She added that a new member of the Panel would also need to be established as one of the Members who had previously been involved had not been returned to the Standards Committee.

The Town Clerk confirmed that Members would be contacted regarding availability for a future Hearing in due course.

8. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk setting out updates on a number of outstanding actions.

Code of Conduct

A Co-opted Member reported that they had consulted the website earlier this morning and had searched 'complaints'. She expressed concern that information around how to make a complaint about a Member was not easily accessible and highlighted the need for this to be more clearly signposted in future.

Other Members agreed with this point and highlighted that the relevant complaint form was not only difficult to locate on the website but was also not user friendly. It was currently a PDF form located in the midst of another document. Members requested that users be able to download the form as a Word document going forward.

A Member referred to the wider corporate project currently being undertaken to replace the public website and suggested that these points be fed into the work around this.

The Chairman stated that she had stressed the importance of ease of access to these documents on many occasions and asked that this now be taken forward as a priority.

Annual reminder to Members on updating registered interests

A Member suggested that any communications sent to Members around this should be clearly worded with all Members seriously encouraged to update their registers in a timely manner.

A Member questioned whether this exercise could be undertaken in conjunction with the Chamberlain's related party transactions exercise in future years. The Town Clerk reported that the annual update to Members' registered interests was undertaken as part of the new municipal year whilst the related party

transactions exercise was aligned with the end of the financial year. For this reason, the two needed to remain as separate processes.

RECEIVED.

9. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk setting out its Draft Annual Report for onward submission to the Court of Common Council.

A Member referred to the strong views expressed by the wider Court of Common Council around the work of the Standards Committee as well as its constitution and the tenure of some of those appointed. He questioned whether this needed to be reflected in some way within the report or its submission delayed.

Another Member stated that he felt that this was unnecessary and emphasised that the report was intended as an update on the work of the Committee over the past 12 months. He recognised that the Committee were continuing to address a number of issues but was of the view that this should not allowed to hold up the submission of the annual report in any way given that the Committee were obliged to produce this each year.

A Member accepted that the report should be submitted to the Court of Common Council in July 2019 as was customary but underlined the need to add some text to recognise the issues that had been raised by the Court and the work being undertaken to address these. Members were supportive of this approach and the inclusion of a paragraph to recognise that there continued to be a degree of dispute on a number of matters that would inform the work of the Committee going forward and around which there were ongoing discussions.

The Town Clerk clarified that the annual report was intended to be backwards looking and suggested that any ongoing discussions/work around the issues raised by the Court of Common Council in recent months could be highlighted by the Chairman orally in her introduction to provide Members with the necessary assurances. The Co-opted Members were supportive of this approach.

After much debate, the Committee were of the view that it would be preferable to include a reference to the fact some issues in the report were ongoing. Two Co-opted Members wished for it to be noted that they disagreed with this approach.

The Committee were content to delegate the final wording to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

A Co-opted Member noted that, in accordance with the report from the Committee on Standards in Public Life to be considered later on the agenda, future annual reports would need to provide more detail on code of conduct complaints going forward.

RESOLVED – That, the Committee:-

- (a) Delegate to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, the inclusion of some additional wording within the written report to reflect that ongoing discussions regarding the Committee's work continue;
- (b) Subject to the addition of this wording, approve the contents of the annual report;
- (c) In accordance with the Committee's terms of reference, refer the annual report to the Court of Common Council for information.

10. REVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS BY THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE

The Committee considered a report of the Comptroller and City Solicitor requiring Members to review how well the City Corporation's current arrangements match the recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life around the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by public office holders in local government and to consider any changes to existing processes that may be desirable.

The Chairman stated that the Committee would consider a future report on this containing more detailed recommendations and specific proposals once the Government's response to a number of the points raised had been received and any required legislative changes were implemented. There were, however, some recommendations that could be adopted by individual local authorities sooner. The Committee were asked to highlight areas of interest and particular recommendations that they would like to see brought back for further consideration.

The Comptroller signposted the report from the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) as the most significant national event regarding Standards since the introduction of the Localism Act 2011. He went on to highlight that many local authorities appeared to be grappling with similar issues to the City Corporation around matters such as disclosable pecuniary interests and Section 31 of the Localism Act. He was of the view that the recommendations within the report were likely to occupy the Standards Committee's work for the municipal year ahead. He urged Members to take the time to read the appended report in its entirety.

The Comptroller and City Solicitor acknowledged that whilst many of the CSPL's recommendations, summarised at appendix 2, were for Government consideration, there were also some matters that the City Corporation might want to take a view on. There were also a number of potential 'quick wins' which could be implemented immediately if Members so wished, such as offering legal indemnity to Independent Persons – something that had recently been provided to the individuals sitting on the City Corporation's Local Government Pensions Board.

Appendix 3 listed a number of best practice recommendations with those applicable to the City Corporation indicated alongside commentary highlighting where the organisation was 'ahead of the curve' on a number of these matters.

The Committee went on to discuss each of the recommendations detailed in Appendices 2 and 3 in turn:

Appendix 2

Rec 1 – It was noted that this recommendation was for the LGA to consider. The Comptroller and City Solicitor clarified that there had been no indication as to the LGA's/Government's response to any of the recommendations proposed to date. Once those responses were known, they would be reported back to Committee.

Rec 2 – Members indicated that they would like to consider the requirements around publishing a home address in an authority's register of interests in more detail.

A Member commented that there were security reasons for some resident Members not wishing to do this. The Comptroller and City Solicitor confirmed that there were provisions in place for an address to be left off of the public register where this could lead to violence or intimidation. He agreed to bring a report back on this issue.

Rec 3 – A Member commented that many elected and Co-opted Members represented a number of different bodies and that this recommendation could create difficulties. He stressed that this would therefore need to be addressed carefully.

The Deputy Chairman underlined that if this recommendation was subsequently adopted by Government this would require the issuing of updated guidance to Members. She questioned whether the proposed presumption that a Member was acting in an official capacity should apply in all circumstances.

The Committee requested that this recommendation and the potential issues around it should feature in a further report of the Comptroller and City Solicitor to the next meeting of the Standards Committee. A Co-opted Member asked that this also have regard to the letter sent regarding social media use at the conclusion of a Complaints Hearing heard by the Hearing Sub (Standards) Committee last year.

Rec 4 – The Committee were of the view that this recommendation was less controversial but again requested that the potential issues feature in a further report.

Rec 5 – It was noted that the City Corporation had already implemented this.

Rec 6 – It was noted that the City Corporation already required any gift or hospitality with a value of £100 or more or totalling £200 or more over a year

from a single source, to be registered. The Comptroller and City Solicitor highlighted that Members may, however, wish to consider whether they wanted to change the limits in line with the CSPL recommendation.

Rec 7 – It was noted that the CSPL's suggested test was consistent with this Committee's published guidance on making sense of the current provision.

Rec 8 – It was noted that this matter had been raised by the Committee previously with a view to introducing a defined term of office for the City Corporation's Independent Persons. A Member voiced the view that he, personally, felt that the recommendation of a fixed term of two year, renewable once, was too short.

The Committee requested a future report outlining the pros and cons of introducing fixed terms of different lengths. Members also requested that the report outline how engaged the Independent Persons were, how they were kept informed and what their views were since the Standards Regime Review had recommended that they no longer regularly attend Standards Committee meetings. The Chairman assured Members that the Independent Persons continued to receive all Committee agendas, partake in Complaints Hearings and were also invited to meet with the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and the Comptroller for six monthly meetings at Guildhall which they found extremely useful.

Rec 9 – The Comptroller and City Solicitor underlined that it was a statutory duty to consult an Independent Person but that there was currently no guidance as to how this should be done. He added that, at the City Corporation, Independent Persons were invited to personally attend Hearings. This meant that their views were already captured in the minutes. However, he agreed to bring a report back on this issue.

Rec 10 – It was noted that this would require a change to primary legislation.

Rec 11 – Members agreed with this recommendation and requested that a report be brought back to this Committee and the Finance Committee regarding the provision of legal indemnities to the Independent Persons for onward approval by the Court of Common Council.

A Member noted that the Independent Persons role had been expanded beyond the Standards Regime and also encompassed involvement in disciplinary procedures against the organisation's statutory officers. He added that the Establishment Committee would also therefore have an interest in this matter as well as on the term of office and method of appointment for this position going forward.

Rec 12 – It was noted that this would require a change to primary legislation.

Rec 13 – It was noted that this would require a change to primary legislation.

Rec 14 – It was noted that this would require a change to primary legislation.

Rec 15 – The Committee noted that most of the information recommended for publication was already provided in the annual report. They agreed, in principle, that information about the general nature of the complaints received should be provided in future annual reports.

Members requested a future report looking at this recommendation in more detail before any changes were made to the format of the Committee's annual report.

Rec 16 – It was recognised that introducing a power of suspension would require a change to primary legislation. However, it was requested that this issue and any subsequent developments be revisited in a future report. It was noted that, at present, the removal of allowances would not be an option for City Corporation Members. Removal from certain Committees and removal of hospitality could, however, already be recommended in appropriate circumstances if a Member was found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct.

Rec 17 – The Committee noted that this recommendation was for the Government to implement.

Rec 18 – Members were in agreement with this recommendation but noted that it would require a change to primary legislation.

Rec 19 – It was noted that this was not applicable to the City Corporation.

Rec 20 – It was noted that this was not applicable to the City Corporation.

Rec 21 – It was noted that this was not applicable to the City Corporation.

Rec 22 – The Committee indicated that they would like further information around this recommendation.

Rec 23 – The Committee were in favour of adding a named contact for the external auditor and asked that a recommendation be made to the Audit and Risk Management Committee and Establishment Committee along these lines.

Rec 24 – The Comptroller and City Solicitor explained that this matter related to the so-called 'Whistleblowing' legislation and that any amendment would require Government support. Members requested that Officers report back on this matter in due course but felt that the recommendation was a good one.

The Comptroller and City Solicitor added that any change to the statutory position would require a future revision to the organisation's Employee Code of Conduct which, at present, stipulated that staff were not able to lobby Members on employment matters and there could potentially be some crossover here. A Member agreed that this would be sensible and suggested that the Employee Code of Conduct might be updated in those circumstances to suggest that staff should not lobby Members on employment matters unless under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Another suggestion was that the Government

might want to restrict the number of Members who could be lobbied on employment matters (for example, in the case of the City Corporation, Establishment Committee members only).

Members suggested that any future report around this recommendation be submitted to both this Committee, the Establishment Committee and the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

Rec 25 – It was noted that, should compulsory Member training effectively be introduced nationally through political parties, the City Corporation would be out of kilter. The Comptroller and City Solicitor added that there were, however, alternative mechanisms that might be introduced by the City Corporation in those circumstances such as not allowing a Member to join certain Committee's without first undertaking appropriate training.

Rec 26 – It was noted that this matter was for the LGA.

In summarising, a Member stated that she would strongly advise that the City Corporation adopt the approach of 'comply or explain' in relation to all of the recommendations set out and that, where applicable, these should be adhered to unless there was good reason not to.

Appendix 3

BP1 – Members were of the view that a definition of bullying and harassment and examples around the sorts of behaviour that would be caught should be adopted and that a report should be brought back on this matter.

BP2 – Members considered that this point was already sufficiently covered.

BP3 – It was noted that the Member Code of Conduct had recently been reviewed. Members were of the view that an annual review was too frequent but were content to receive a further report as to how the Code might be reviewed more regularly, on a suitable timescale – possibly every three years - going forward.

BP4 – Members re-emphasised the need to feed into the corporate website review with regard to the accessibility and visibility of the Code of Conduct.

BP5 – It was noted that the City Corporation was already acting in line with best practice.

BP6 – It was noted that the City Corporation was already acting in line with best practice. However, Members requested that the current wording should be reviewed through a further report.

BP7 – It was noted that the City Corporation was already acting in line with best practice.

BP8 – It was noted that the City Corporation was already acting in line with best practice.

BP9 – The Committee requested that more detail be provided on this matter in the form of a future report.

BP10 - Members re-emphasised the need to feed into the corporate website review with regard to the accessibility and visibility of the Complaints Procedure.

BP11 – It was noted that this recommendation was not applicable to the City Corporation. It was, however, suggested that some clarification around ‘self-referral’ of complaints might be useful in a future report.

BP12 – It was noted that this recommendation was not applicable to the City Corporation.

BP13 – It was noted that the Complaints Procedure already addressed conflicts of interest, including those affecting the Monitoring Officer. In such cases, colleagues or those external to the organisation would be asked to undertake the investigation. It was suggested that future consideration could be given to utilising other local authority Monitoring Officers, with each case looked at on its merits.

The Deputy Chairman stated that she was of the view that it paid to be robust in terms of conflicts of interest which could be difficult to manage in practice. She noted, however, that the City Corporation did already have mechanisms in place whereby such conflicts were managed which seemed to work sufficiently well. The Chairman agreed but asked that Officers look to spell out the pros and cons in using other Local Authority Monitoring Officers in a future report.

Members were also of the view that the terms of reference for any external investigation needed to be clear from the outset and adhered to.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That Members note the Review of Local Government Ethical Standards by the Committee on Standards in Public Life at Appendix 1;
- (ii) After reviewing the Recommendations at Appendix 2, Members support steps being taken around the implementation of Recommendations 9, 11 and 23. Members requested further detailed reports in relation to Recommendations 2-4, 6, 8, 15, 16, 22 and 24 going forward;
- (iii) After reviewing the Best Practice Recommendations at Appendix 3, Members requested further reports in relation to Recommendations 1, 3, 6, 9, 11 and 13 going forward.

11. CO-OPTED MEMBER VACANCY

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk requesting that Members note the vacancy that now exists for a Co-opted Member of the Standards Committee following the recent resignation of Mark Greenburgh and to determine what action, if any, to take at this stage in terms of re-appointing to this vacancy.

In response to questions, the Chairman and Officers clarified why the decision to retain four Co-opted Members of the Committee had been taken and was still relevant. The Chairman reported that two different Co-optees were needed to sit on the two separate complaints stages – assessment and hearing. It was also not unusual for there to be more than one complaint progressing at the same time and for their attendance to be required at relatively short notice. Members were satisfied that the number of Co-optees appointed to the Committee should remain at four.

Members were therefore of the view that the appointment process should commence as soon as possible.

A Co-opted Member again suggested that consideration be given to the inclusion of one of the existing Co-optees on the Selection Panel in an observer capacity. This suggestion was supported by the Committee and it was also felt useful for the existing Co-opted Member to be able to contribute to the deliberations following interviews and to be able to feed into the questions ahead of the interview process.

RESOLVE – That the Committee note the vacancy and request that the Town Clerk commence the recruitment process as soon as possible.

12. **INFORMAL MEETING OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE 03/04/2019**

The Committee considered a separately circulated report of the Town Clerk setting out the main points raised by Members at an informal meeting of the Standards Committee held on 3 April 2019 following the resignation of a Co-opted Member of the Committee and calling for wider discussion amongst the Committee on these.

The Deputy Chairman stated that she felt that there had been a significant amount of unfairness in terms of the treatment of all Members of the Standards Committee, but particularly its Co-opted Members in recent months. She expressed particular concerns around matters being raised at the Court of Common Council, in public session, where Co-opted Members had no opportunity to respond. Wider concern was also expressed around the fact that Members were able to put a Motion to the Court asking for the removal of a Member from a Committee without the Committee in question receiving prior notice of this or being given the ability to address concerns. This often meant that the Court were not provided with all of the necessary facts or recommendations from relevant Committees/Officers. The Chairman agreed that this was something that needed further consideration.

A Co-opted Member stated that there seemed to be a need for the wider Court to be educated as to the role of Co-opted Members in general. He went on to question the appropriate use of the Corporation's email system and whether recent emails had been in breach of the organisation's fair use policy. He hoped that this matter would be addressed. Members agreed that there should be sanctions in place around this behaviour in the same way that there would be for many Members acting in their professional capacities. The Chairman underlined that this should be viewed as a reputational risk not only to those individuals engaging in the behaviour but also to the Corporation. She underlined that these email chains were sent to elected Members only, with Co-opted Members (of any Committee) not given sight of these. There would also appear to be a question around the appropriate processing of individuals details. The Chairman suggested that it would be useful for this Committee to consider a future report as to appropriate/inappropriate Member email use.

In relation to the possibility of this Committee requesting that the Audit and Risk Management Committee consider adding 'Standards issues' to its risk register, the Committee questioned whether the types of issues being discussed were wider than the Standards Committee in terms of appropriate email use, inappropriate behaviour in general and the processing of personal information. A Co-opted Member seconded this view and questioned whether recent events were symptomatic of something wider and a cultural resistance to the Standards regime per se in some quarters.

The Town Clerk clarified that there was a hierarchy in terms of risk with both Corporate and Departmental Risk Registers in existence. It was suggested that the risk might therefore be more appropriately included on the Comptroller and City Solicitor's departmental risk register. A Member clarified that an information security risk already featured on the Corporate risk register.

RESOLVED – That:-

- (i) A future report concerning the appropriate use of email by Members be considered by the Standards Committee;
- (ii) The Committee request a report back on the potential of amending Standing Orders to ensure that any future Motion calling for the removal of a Member from a Committee should not go directly to the Court of Common Council without the Committee concerned being notified of/able to consider the matter in advance;
- (iii) The Standards Committee seek the views of the Audit and Risk Management Committee on any matters it considers to have risk aspects going forward.

13. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT
PETITION OF RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF LONDON REGARDING THE
CITY CORPORATION'S CURRENT "STANDARDS" POLICY AND
PRACTICE**

The Committee considered a separately circulated report of the Town Clerk asking that Members consider the petition referred to them by the Court of Common Council.

Mary Durcan and Barbara Newman wished to place on record that they were signatories of the petition.

The Chairman stated that, given the petition was based on criticism of current policy, her main concern was around how much detail on the current policy signatories were actually given. A Member commented that he had been personally informed by a resident who was approached to sign that signatories were provided with no information and when this was questioned, details were refused.

The Chairman stated that the recommendation of the Town Clerk was that this matter should now be referred back to Officers to report back on to the Standards Committee. Further discussions could then be had at this point. The Chairman suggested it might be useful, meanwhile, for her to send a short letter to signatories, which sought to address some apparent confusion regarding policy. Since the vast majority of signatories were residents from the Barbican or Golden Lane Estates, this could be done easily by using their own communication channels; only a few dozen residents would need to be written to individually. It was hoped that this may provide some clarity going forward and help to underline that a major external review of the City Corporation's Standards Regime had only recently taken place and that the new Dispensations regime had only been in operation for 2 months and would be subject to an annual review.

The Committee unanimously supported this suggestion and suggested that the letter be drafted by the Chairman in consultation with the Deputy Chairman and the Comptroller and City Solicitor and Director of Communications. It was felt that the letter should also signpost where recipients might find more detailed information on the City Corporation's Standards regime as a whole.

The Chairman also undertook to circulate the letter to all Members of the Court and all Co-opted Members of the Standards Committee for information.

The Comptroller and City Solicitor confirmed that he was proposing to append the details of all signatories to the report concerning the petition as a non-public document. Members would then need to decide whether to consider this in open or closed session.

RESOLVED – That the petition be referred to Officers to produce a report for further consideration by the Standards Committee at their next meeting.

15. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

16. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The non-public minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2019 were considered and approved as a correct record.

17. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES OF HEARING SUB (STANDARDS)**

The non-public minutes of the Hearing Sub (Standards) Committee meeting held on 1 March 2019 were received.

18. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions raised in the non-public session.

19. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

A question regarding the panel membership at a recent meeting of the Dispensations Sub (Standards) Committee held on 1 April 2019 was raised.

The meeting ended at 1.04 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Gemma Stokley
tel.no.: 020 7332 3414
gemma.stokley@cityoflondon.gov.uk