

# Report – Standards Committee

## Independent Review of the City of London’s Standards Regime

*To be presented on Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017*

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons  
of the City of London in Common Council assembled.*

### SUMMARY

On 21 July 2016, your Standards Committee advised the Court of its intention to commission an independent, broadly-based review of the arrangements currently in place for addressing matters connected with the conduct of Members (including co-opted Members) under the Localism Act 2011 with particular focus on the Complaints Procedure (alleged breaches of the Members’ Code of Conduct).

The choice of the individual to undertake the review was left entirely to the Town Clerk to decide and he appointed Mr Charles Bourne QC of 11 King’s Bench Walk to carry out the task.

The report detailing Mr Bourne’s findings, together with his recommendations, is now presented to the Court of Common Council for information, at this stage. The Standards Committee will consider Mr Bourne’s report in detail and report back to the Court during 2017 as to how the various recommendations might best be progressed and implemented, as appropriate.

### RECOMMENDATION

We **recommend** that, at this stage, the Court of Common Council notes Mr Bourne’s report and findings and that the Standards Committee will consider his report in detail and report back to the Court during 2017 on how the various recommendations contained therein might best be progressed and implemented, as appropriate.

### MAIN REPORT

#### Background

1. At the meeting of the Court of Common Council on 23 June 2016, concerns were expressed by a number of Members about the content of the Standards Committee’s annual report, principally around the identification of a Member involved in a particular complaint and the Committee’s general handling of that complaint. This led to a decision by the Court to refer the report back to the Standards Committee for further consideration.
2. In light of the concerns raised, your Committee re-submitted its annual report to the Court on 21 July 2016, without naming the individual Member concerned

with the complaint and the original report was withdrawn from publication on the City Corporation's website.

3. Further, to ensure that the City Corporation's standards framework remained fit for purpose and that Members had full confidence in the arrangements in place, the Committee also reported, at the 21 July 2016 Court meeting, their intention to commission an independent review of the arrangements currently in place for addressing matters connected with the conduct of Members under the Localism Act 2011.
4. The Standards Committee proposed that the review should be broad in its remit and examine the arrangements the City Corporation currently has in place for addressing matters connected with the conduct of Members (including co-opted Members) under the Localism Act 2011 with particular focus on the Complaints Procedure (alleged breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct). It was the Committee's particular intention that this should be a broad and independent review so that the City Corporation's responsibilities under the Act, fulfilled by your Standards Committee in accordance with the Terms of Reference set out by the Court, could be further considered.
5. The choice of the individual to undertake the review was left entirely to the Town Clerk to decide and he appointed Mr Charles Bourne QC of 11 King's Bench Walk to carry out the task. As part of Mr Bourne's review process, written submissions were sought from all directly elected and co-opted Members from the outset. Mr Bourne met subsequently with Members of the Standards Committee and then, on a one-to-one basis, with a number of other Members.
6. A meeting with Mr Bourne also took place on 7 November 2016 to which all Members were invited to enable further consultation and input into the process.

### **Proposals**

7. The attached report is Mr Bourne's review findings and it presents a number of recommendations for consideration.
8. Your Committee recommends that, at this stage, the Court of Common Council notes Mr Bourne's report and findings and that the Standards Committee will consider his report in detail and report back to the Court during 2017 on how the various recommendations contained therein might best be progressed and implemented, as appropriate.

### **Conclusion**

9. In light of the concerns expressed at the Court meeting on 23 June 2016, your Committee concluded that a broad, independent review of the arrangements currently in place for addressing matters connected with the conduct of Members under the Localism Act 2011 should be undertaken by a suitably qualified person, identified and appointed by the Town Clerk. The outcome of this review, including a number of recommendations are now presented to the Court to note at this stage on the basis that the Standards Committee consider

the findings and recommendations in detail and report to the Court with any proposals.

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 16<sup>th</sup> day of December 2016.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

**Oliver Arthur Wynlayne Lodge**  
Chairman, Standards Committee