



Member Development and Standards Sub Committee

Date: FRIDAY, 8 MARCH 2024

Time: 11.00 am

Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM, 2ND FLOOR, WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members: Deputy Ann Holmes (Chief Commoner) Chair
Helen Fentimen, Deputy Chairman
Munsur Ali
Deputy Keith Bottomley
Deputy Peter Dunphy
Anthony David Fitzpatrick
Alderman Alison Gowman
John Griffiths
Deputy Christopher Hayward
Deputy Charles Edward Lord
Eamonn Mullally
Deputy Nighat Qureishi
Naresh Hari Sonpar

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Ian Thomas CBE
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

3. **PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on 15th December 2023.

For Decision
(Pages 5 - 12)

STANDARD ITEMS

4. **MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT**

Comptroller and City Solicitor to be heard.

For Discussion

5. **INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF MEMBER BEHAVIOUR (LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION)**

Report of the Town Clerk.

For Decision
(Pages 13 - 18)

6. **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

Report of the Town Clerk.

For Information
(Pages 19 - 22)

7. **STANDARDS UPDATE**

Comptroller and City Solicitor to be heard.

For Information

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ITEMS

8. MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE REPORT

Report of the Town Clerk.

For Decision
(Pages 23 - 30)

9. NEW MEMBER INDUCTION PLANS 2025

Town Clerk to be heard.

For Discussion
(Pages 31 - 38)

10. DATES AND TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

To agree dates and times of future meetings

Wednesday 17th July 2024 - 11.00am
Thursday 24th October 2024 – 11.00am
Thursday 30th January 2025 – 11.00am

For Decision

11. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

For Decision

Part 2 Non Public Agenda

14. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

To agree the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 15th December 2023.

15. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED.**

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND STANDARDS SUB COMMITTEE

Friday, 15 December 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Member Development and Standards Sub Committee
held at on Friday, 15 December 2023 at 11.00 am

Present

Members

Deputy Ann Holmes (Chief Commoner) (Chairman)
Helen Fentimen (Deputy Chairman)
Munsur Ali (observing virtually only)
Deputy Peter Dunphy
Alderman Alison Gowman
John Griffiths
Deputy Charles Edward Lord
Eamonn Mullally
Nighat Quereshi (observing virtually only)
Naresh Hari Sonpar

Officers:

Gregory Moore	- Deputy Town Clerk
Polly Dunn	- Assistant Town Clerk and Executive Director, Governance & Member Services
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Zoe Lewis	- Town Clerk's Department
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor
Edward Wood	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Deborah Bell	- Community & Children's Services Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Deputy Keith Bottomley and Deputy Christopher Hayward.

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

There were no declarations.

3. PUBLIC MINUTES

The Sub-Committee considered the public minutes and non-public summary of their last meeting held on 15 September 2023 and approved them as a correct record.

4. **DRAFT CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Sub-Committee considered a joint report of the Town Clerk and the Comptroller and City Solicitor presenting a draft Members' Code of Conduct for further consideration and review ahead of any wider consultation.

The Comptroller and City Solicitor introduced the report highlighting that the City Corporation were obligated to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst its elected and Co-opted Members in its capacity as a Local Authority and Police Authority. Under the Localism Act 2011, it was also necessary for it to adopt a Code of Conduct, consistent with the seven principles of public life and containing appropriate arrangements as to the registration and disclosure of pecuniary and other interests. It was underlined that there was no prescribed form of wording for such a Code which could be agreed locally. It was highlighted that there was nothing defective about the City Corporation's current Code of Conduct but it was best practice to review this on a regular basis. It was reported that the Committee on Standards in Public Life recommended that the Local Government Association (LGA) create an updated model Code of Conduct following a consultation exercise. This had now been adopted by a number of local authorities but by no means universally.

The Civic Affairs Sub-Committee who had previously held responsibility for oversight of this area of work had agreed upon a hybrid Code for the City Corporation – adopting much of the model Code whilst also retaining some elements of the Corporation's current Code around certain City-specific elements. The culmination of this was as set out within Appendix 1 of the report and was now presented for this Sub-Committee to comment on and approve ahead of any wider consultation involving all elected and Co-opted Members (including Independent Persons) prior to adoption. The Sub-Committee could also consider public consultation at this juncture. It was reported that, ultimately, the final Code would require approval by the Policy and Resources Committee and, subsequently, the Court of Common Council.

A Member queried what might happen to any outstanding complaint against a Member who went on to resign from the Court of Common Council. They added that they were pleased to see reference to charity work within the draft Code but underlined that there were different areas in which Members were involved with charities – one being where they sat on a Committee and the Corporation was corporate trustee and the other where they were individual trustees – they therefore queried whether the Code should clarify this. The Comptroller responded that, were there to be an existing complaint against someone who subsequently ceased to be a Member, the process could continue if felt appropriate/worthwhile although the subject person could not be compelled to attend any Panel meetings. He added that the available sanctions in these circumstances would be further limited with censure probably being the main option. In relation to charities, it was highlighted that paragraph C6.2 would apply to both scenarios, including situations where Members were individual trustees by virtue of their position on the Court of Common Council, and allow for action to be taken under the Code. He added that further changes to the wording could be considered if helpful.

Another Member stated that as well as being charity trustees, some Members also held company directorships by virtue of being an elected Member and cited the Finance Committee Chair as a specific example of this. They queried whether this might also be usefully reflected within the Code. The Comptroller and City Solicitor stated that this wording could be added for absolute clarity.

Another Member queried whether the Code could be more prescriptive as to appropriate use of resources/technology provided to Members. The Comptroller and City Solicitor responded to say that this was as set out within the Corporation's separate IT Use Policy with which all Members were expected to comply. Whilst the Code was an overall behavioural framework tool there were clearly a number of other relevant policies sitting behind this such as the Planning Protocol for example which set out how those who were members of the Planning Committee were expected to behave. The Member responded to query whether there was therefore a definitive list of all other policies with which Members were expected to comply. The Comptroller and City Solicitor commented that the Code of Conduct may not be the best place to hold such a list given that policies often changed and that the Code itself was only reviewed approximately every 3 years. The point was made that each relevant policy should have a date by which it required review and that it was therefore reasonable to inform Members when the situation changed. One Member felt that it was also reasonable that all relevant policies should be referenced or linked within the Code. Another Member cautioned against this, stating that purporting to include a definitive list of policies, which subsequently became out of date, could lead to further problems. They therefore suggested simply highlighting that such other documents existed. Officers were supportive of this approach but understood the request from Members to be updated when any changes were made to relevant policy documents going forward. It was suggested that the Members' Portal would be the most obvious place to link all relevant documents. The Comptroller and City Solicitor stated that the current drafting had been adopted from the LGA's model Code, drawing attention to specific policies where it was felt that these were most relevant, but commented that a paragraph could be added to the beginning of the draft Code making it clear that there were other documents that needed to be read in conjunction with this, and listing the most important ones.

Subject to the inclusion of the points made above, the Sub-Committee were agreed that the draft Code should be shared with all elected and Co-opted Members as well as the Panel of Independent Persons by way of consultation. It was noted that it may necessitate further consideration by this Sub-Committee were any substantive comments to be received and that it would then be referred on to the Policy and Resources Committee and Court of Common Council for final approval ahead of adoption.

RESOLVED: - That Members:

- Approve the latest version of the draft Code of Conduct subject to the inclusion of the additional comments made;

- Confirm that they are then content for the draft document to be shared with all existing elected Members, Co-opted Members and the Panel of Independent Persons for further consultation.

5. **MANDATORY TRAINING**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk around various options in terms of mandatory Code of Conduct training implementation and delivery.

The Town Clerk introduced the report stating that the draft Code of Conduct that the Sub-Committee had just approved for wider consultation at the previous item contained a statement which read 'I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by the Corporation' – in practice, this would mean that, when the Code was formally adopted, any Member failing to undertake such training would be in breach of it. By implication, Code of Conduct training would therefore become mandatory with the introduction of this new Code. Given this, this report therefore asked Members to consider how best such training could be implemented and delivered as well as any other additional measures that they might wish to consider introducing such as a dedicated Standing Order reinforcing this requirement within the Code and setting out that those failing to undertake the training would not be eligible for appointment to any Committee.

A Member queried to whom the new Code would apply and therefore for whom the mandatory training would apply. They also stated that they were of the view that a public record of Code of Conduct training completed and the date on which it was last completed should be introduced for full transparency.

Officers clarified that the Corporation's Code of Conduct was already applied to any member of the Corporation and any member of a committee or sub-committee of the Corporation (voting or non-voting), it was proposed that this continue and so the proposed mandatory training element would therefore apply to all.

The Chair commented that her view was that existing Members should continue to be offered training and be encouraged to view the recordings of the Code of Conduct training sessions already provided and that it should become mandatory for all as of March 2025 with the next all-out elections. It was highlighted that communications on this new requirement would need to be sent to all in good time. Officers stated that Code of Conduct training would be offered to all very early on in the new Member Induction programme and that the dates for this and its importance could be communicated to all candidates well in advance such that Committee appointments at the April 2025 Court were not unnecessarily hindered.

With regard to the frequency with which all should be encouraged to undertake the training, the Sub-Committee were of the view that it should be mandated once per term of office unless there were to be any major changes to the Localism Act, under a new Government for example, which would necessitate that happening any sooner.

RESOLVED: - That Members support the introduction of mandatory Code of Conduct training for all as of March 2025, at which juncture all will be required to sign up to the new Code, this training to be repeated once per electoral term for all.

6. **STANDARDS UPDATE**

The Town Clerk reported that the three new Independent Persons successfully appointed in the Autumn had now attended an initial induction with the Deputy Town Clerk, Comptroller and City Solicitor, Chief Commoner and Principal Governance and Member Services Officer.

It was reported that there were currently no live complaints. The Chief Commoner reported that she was hopeful that the recently introduced Pre-Complaints Protocol was working well.

It was also hoped that all twelve Independent Persons would meet at the Guildhall in early 2024 for a training and introduction session allowing the full Panel to meet for the first time.

RECEIVED.

7. **MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk reviewing the Member Development offerings from the last quarter in terms of feedback and attendance figures. It also sought endorsement for sessions planned for the next quarter and provided a forward-look at the quarter beyond this. It was hoped that always looking two quarters ahead would help to effectively address recent criticism as to lack of notice around training offerings. It was reported that the Member Portal appeared to be a successful tool to date, however, it was noted that viewing figures of training recordings were not as high as hoped to date. Finally, it was highlighted that this report sought endorsement of the process by which individual Members could submit requests for external training.

The Chair commented that the more recent training events had been advertised in good time with regular reminders also sent to all. Despite this, attendance had still been disappointing. Different timings and formats had also been explored this quarter with little impact upon overall take up. Going forward, it was felt that consideration could therefore be given to mandating certain training around Chairmanship and Safeguarding for example.

A Member commented favourably on the training sessions they had attended to date but queried whether sessions that were shorter – 90 minutes as opposed to two hours - might appear more attractive. In terms of feedback, they added that the current Microsoft Form format used was often difficult to access on certain devices. They therefore queried whether a training session on Microsoft Tools and other relevant IT skills might be of use to all in the next quarter.

Another Member suggested that Outlook calendar invites be sent to all Members for forthcoming sessions with all encouraged to either accept or

decline in order to give those facilitating the sessions a good idea of attendance numbers. It was felt that this should be sent to all in the first instance with Members given the option to opt out in order to try and foster a culture of learning and training across the board.

In terms of the Member Portal and viewing the recordings of recent training sessions, a Member commented that these should be placed more centrally on the site for ease of access. He stated that it would be worth reviewing the page layout and web design as a whole going forward. He commented that it appeared to be relatively text heavy at present. Another Member commented that those viewing recordings of training sessions could also be asked to submit feedback on the offering and queried whether there was a means by which such feedback forms could be sent automatically once a recording had been viewed. In response to further questions, the Town Clerk clarified that whilst the Portal was able to provide viewing figures for each recording it was not possible to discern which individual Members had viewed these. Records of attendees at sessions (both in-person and virtually) were held centrally.

In terms of external training, the Chair commented that this tended to be expensive and that, generally, if a session were to be of maximum benefit, it would be preferable to offer it to more than one member. The Sub-Committee stated that each application should be considered on its merit with funds fairly apportioned but that the default position should be to offer training in-house insofar as possible. A Member commented that it was useful to have external training for certain areas that were statutorily mandated such as Licensing but that this tended to be offered to the full Committee as opposed to individual Members. Another Member commented that external training could also be beneficial in terms of viewing the organisation in a wider local authority/local government context which may go some way to addressing certain behavioural issues and avoid Members from becoming too insular. In this vein, A Member commented that there were various bodies such as the LGA offered training and development opportunities to elected members free of charge. The Chair suggested that all Members be invited to feed in any knowledge of such free courses to the Town Clerk so that these could be shared amongst the Court. It was noted that these were useful in terms of networking as well as learning.

RESOLVED: - That the Sub-Committee:

- note the report and feedback as to Quarter 3 (September to December 2023) offerings, delivery and attendance;
- agree to cancel future sessions with fewer than eight registrants a week ahead of the scheduled offering;
- approve the content and direction proposed in respect of future offerings outlined for Quarter 4 (January to March 2024) and the potential offerings for Quarter 1 (April to June 2024); and
- approve the process by which Members are able to apply to attend non-City learning events

8. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

There were no additional, urgent items of business for consideration.

10. **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 item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item No

11-13

Paragraph No(s).

3

11. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Sub-Committee considered the non-public minutes of their last meeting held on 15 September 2023 and approved them as a correct record.

12. **CONFIDENTIALITY AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Comptroller and City Solicitor relative to how the Members' Code of Conduct deals with confidential and related information.

13. **INDEPENDENT REVIEW**

The Sub-Committee considered a late, separately circulated report of the Town Clerk presenting the draft findings of a recent Independent Review and asked that they consider these and provide any feedback ahead of proposed wider consultation.

14. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions in the non-public session.

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED.**

There were no additional, urgent items of business for consideration in the non-public session.

The meeting ended at 12.36 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Gemma Stokley
gemma.stokley@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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Committee(s): Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee	Date: 08/03/2024
Subject: Independent Review of Member Behaviour (Local Government Association)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	All
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so how much?	N/A
What is the source of funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department	N/A
Report of: Town Clerk	
Report author(s): Gemma Stokley	For Decision

Summary

Good administration and effective decision-making is dependent upon successful Member/Officer working relationships. In this vein, and mindful of the need to encourage constructive and positive behaviours, the Town Clerk (with the support of the Chief Commoner and the Policy Chair) made an approach to the Local Government Association (LGA), in order to commission an independent review of Member behaviour and inform actions that might be taken to support a commitment to learning and improvement within the organisation, in the context of a strong desire to ensure that the City Corporation is an inclusive and respectful place for people to undertake their work and other duties.

Your Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee (MDSSC) were involved from the outset and were provided with an overview of the intended independent review proposed and, following some suggestions around timescale and scope, approved its progression.

The Review is now complete and the report presenting the draft findings in full has now been shared with the full Court membership. Your Sub-Committee first considered the recommendations therein, posed their own further questions and directed that the views of all Members then be sought informally. A brief covering report drawing out some key questions upon which the Sub-Committee wanted all Members to reflect was submitted to the February Informal Court of Common Council meeting and the meeting itself afforded all the opportunity to discuss the proposals in greater detail, ahead of anything formal being put by this Sub-Committee to your Policy and Resources Committee and, ultimately, the Court of Common Council, for adoption.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note and consider the points raised (both at the Informal Court meeting in February and by direct response to the Town Clerk) in relation to the specific questions posed by the Reviewer and this Sub-Committee as set out at

paragraph 7 and instruct the Town Clerk as to necessary next steps to help best address these.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation has 125 elected Members (100 Common Councilmen and 25 Aldermen). Under the Localism Act 2011, the City Corporation must promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members and must adopt a Code of Conduct that is consistent with the Seven Principles of Public Life. The City Corporation has also adopted a Member/Officer Charter that is designed to ensure positive and appropriate working relationships.
2. Notwithstanding the arrangements in place, it has been observed that improvements could be made to the way in which elected Members engage with their peers, as well as with officers and with partner agencies.
3. In an attempt to enhance this area, to promote an inclusive and respectful working environment and support ongoing improvements to Member culture, the LGA was approached to conduct an independent review to assess Member/Member and Member/Officer relationships and behaviours within the City of London Corporation. The LGA responded with a proposal and a timetable for its delivery which was considered and formally endorsed by the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee.
4. The review took place throughout October 2023. The reviewer's approach was to conduct a number of structured interviews as well as a total of seven focus group meetings to which all elected Members were invited (two in-person and five virtually). Where Members responded to indicate that they would prefer not to raise issues within a group setting, they were encouraged to submit any observations to the reviewer in writing and a number opted to do so.
5. The reviewer also conducted desk research of relevant policies (e.g., the Member Code of Conduct, Member/Officer Charter), the Member Development Programme with attendance stats, webcasts of public meetings, staff survey results, external media articles relating to City of London Corporation culture, communications regarding wellbeing/culture/ staff engagement, grievance/whistle-blowing statistics, and other relevant documentation, to assist in the conclusions reached.

Current Position

6. The review has now concluded. This Sub-Committee had the opportunity to review the findings in the first instance at their December 2023 meeting and, whilst reflecting on the questions posed therein, offered their own thoughts/additional points that would benefit from wider input. Thereafter, the Town Clerk was instructed to share the outcomes with all elected Members, asking that they reflect specifically on the questions set out and highlighted below so as to direct Officers as to any potential next steps that they may feel are now necessary to help address them.

7. In summary, and in an attempt to help focus subsequent discussion, the Sub-Committee sought the thoughts of all Members on the following points. Below is a summary of the feedback received on each both at the February Informal Court meeting and also those made separately to the Town Clerk:-

a. What does “good” look like, could this benefit from the creation of a behavioural framework with worked examples? Who would be best placed to feed into such a document?

- *Many were against the introduction of a framework defining ‘good’ and felt that more of a cultural shift/common sense approach was needed versus further formal documentation;*
- *The idea of a City Corporation ‘Mission Statement’ was put forward, clarifying the organisation’s underlying values;*
- *Members underlined the need to be mindful of undertakings made to their electorate;*
- *Words in existing policies and procedures should be put into practice by all in terms of working to create a truly inclusive environment and demonstrating good behaviours;*
- *It was felt that training for all on cultural competency and non-apparent differences would be helpful e.g. – class/social standing, neurodivergence, mental health – important to expand Members’ education beyond the visible;*
- *It was suggested it may be helpful to define ‘bad’ as opposed to ‘good’ behaviours to clearly set out those behaviours that were to be discouraged and called out.*

b. How can the existing messaging around expectations and standards of behaviours be reinforced within the induction process?

No substantive comments.

c. Should the introduction of a “buddying” system for new Members be considered – would Ward Deputies (not necessarily your own Ward Deputy) be best placed to offer this?

- *Many were in favour of a buddying system;*
- *Many felt that this did not necessarily have to fall to Ward Deputies and that this role should be considered entirely separate to any sort of buddying system;*
- *It was noted that some Ward Deputies themselves were newly elected Members that would therefore require their own tailored support/mentoring;*
- *Whilst Ward Deputies were often well placed to advise on generalities, it was noted that Committee specific training/mentoring would be of most value to new Members;*
- *It was felt that a skills audit should be undertaken when onboarding new Members to any Committees;*
- *It was felt that any buddying system should not be overly formalised.*

d. Should the introduction of mandatory training for Committee Chairs be introduced – how best could compliance with this be

encouraged/enforced, through the Code of Conduct/Standing Orders for example?

- *City specific training for Chairs should be offered on a regular basis but not made mandatory, ever mindful of the time demands already placed on Members;*
- *Some queried what the sanction might be for those not undertaking such training were it to be mandated;*
- *It was noted that Chairs were elected annually and that, ultimately, if Members were unhappy with their performance, they could cast their votes accordingly at this juncture;*
- *It was noted that the natural journey of a Chair was to serve as a Member of a certain Committee first, then as Deputy Chair and finally Chair – this was felt to be the ideal ‘training ground’ for the position;*
- *The idea of an annual appraisal or other suitable process by which formal feedback could be received by Chairs from their Committee membership was put forward – this should be a confidential exercise;*
- *The suggestion of a ‘carousel session’ hosted by different Chairs, setting out their approach to managing meetings with an opportunity for Q&As was made;*
- *It was highlighted that clarity around the roles of various Chairs was required.*

e. How might we identify measures of success around the role of the Chief Commoner in supporting informal resolutions to potential complaints? Does the recent change to the Complaints Process and the introduction of a Pre-Complaint Protocol for all Member-on-Member matters requiring consultation with the Chief/a past Chief still on the Court or the Aldermanic Chairs go far enough?

- *It was felt that poor behaviours reported outside of any formal process was an important means by which the organisation could and should build up a picture of the issues emerging and individuals involved;*
- *It was underlined that cultural changes could not be achieved by simply implementing procedures. Communication and common sense/courtesy was key;*
- *It was noted that there would be certain incidents, those involving discrimination around protected characteristics for example, that would simply require a laid down process;*
- *Some warned against the weaponisation of the formal process;*
- *The introduction of the Pre-Complaint process for Member/Member complaints was welcomed;*
- *A Member queried whether a similar informal process could be championed for Member/Officer complaints;*
- *It was noted that the Chief Commoner could not be held accountable where Members indicated that they were not open to using the Pre-Complaint process.*

f. How do we encourage “allyship” in calling out bad behaviour? How and where best might “allyship” be defined?

- *Many felt that this was about common sense and creating environments where all felt confident in calling out bad behaviours, in Committee meetings*

for example, where it could often be helpful to pause and re-set the tone of certain debates;

- *It was important to underline that ‘allyship’ was not about ‘ganging up’ or singling out. Behaviours could be corrected without personalising matters – it was about both behaviours and impacts (albeit sometimes unintended) and emotional intelligence;*
- *It was noted that the Police Authority Board had recently been offered training which may be of relevance/use to the wider Court in this respect;*
- *Speaking out was key - important not to be an active bystander;*
- *Some felt that those on the EDI Sub-Committee could be acting as ‘champions’ in this respect and had a duty to remind all of behavioural expectations;*

Corporate and Strategic Implications

8. The main objective is to foster an environment of professionalism with an expectation that all Members and Officers will be treated courteously and with dignity. The now completed LGA Review and any next steps in terms of addressing the findings here would demonstrate the drive of the Corporation to ensure high standards of conduct and to embrace best practice.

Financial Implications

9. Any ongoing financial implications will be dependent upon next steps determined by Members in responding to recommendations coming forward. This may, therefore, require subsequent bids to be made in due course; however, there are no additional funding implications at this stage.

Resource Implications

10. As above, additional resources may be required to establish any potential action plan and deliver any subsequent learning and development events arising from the points highlighted within the review and directed by this Sub-Committee. Subsequent reports may be required to set these out in greater detail.

Legal Implications

11. The legal implications of the proposal are contained within the body of this report. Members are asked to specifically note the City Corporation’s duty, under the Localism Act 2011, to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members.

Risk Implications

12. Member conduct represents a potential reputational risk to the organisation, together with a practical risk associated with a failure to attract and retain high quality Members and Officers should there be a negative working environment. It is, therefore, in the interests of the Corporation to take such steps as are required to foster a positive and inclusive working environment for its Members and Officers.

Equalities Implications

13. Public bodies have a duty under the Equality Act to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any

other conduct prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The proposals contained in this report do not have any potential negative impact on a particular group of people based on their protected characteristics, rather they seek to actively foster good relations between all.

Climate Implications:

14. There are no climate implications arising from this report.

Security Implications:

15. There are no security implications arising from this report.

Conclusion

16. The independent review of Member behaviour conducted by the LGA has now concluded and is part of a wider commitment to learning and improvement within the organisation, in the context of a strong desire to ensure that the City of London Corporation is an inclusive and respectful place for people to undertake their work and other duties.
17. The review clearly highlights that there is much for the Corporation to be proud of but it is obvious too that some challenges still persist. All Members have now had the opportunity to consider these initial findings. We ask that your Sub-Committee now discuss further and direct Officers as to any potential next steps now required to address the points highlighted here.

Agenda Item 6

Committee(s) Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee – for information	Dated: 08/03/2024
Subject: Decisions taken under delegated authority or urgency powers	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	All
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Town Clerk	For Information
Report author: Gemma Stokley, Town Clerk’s Department	

Summary

This report advises Members of action taken by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, in accordance with Standing Order Nos. 41(b) since the last meeting.

Recommendations

That Members note the action taken since the last meeting of the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee.

Main Report

Urgent Decision: Amendment to Standing Orders to reflect repeal of Section 618 of the Housing Act 1985

Section 618 of the 1985 Act, which applied uniquely to the City of London, provides that the Common Council may establish a Committee to discharge its functions under the Act consisting of such persons as it sees fit. That provision continues to be required for the Common Council’s discharge of its housing functions. Subsections (3) and (4), however, provided:-

“(3) A person is not, by reason only of the fact that he occupies a house at a rental from the Common Council, disqualified from being elected or being a member of that Council or any committee of that Council; but no person shall vote as a member of that Council, or any such committee, on a resolution or question which is proposed or arises in pursuance of this Act or the Housing Associations Act 1985 and relates to land in which he is beneficially interested.

(4) A person who votes in contravention of subsection (3) commits a summary offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard

scale; but the fact of his giving the vote does not invalidate any resolution or proceeding of the authority.”

Members of the then Standards Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee initially instructed the Remembrancer in March 2020 to look into the possibility and implications of pursuing a repeal of these provisions. Legislation was finally passed in December 2023 repealing the relevant part of section 618 of the Housing Act 1985 and, as such, the Governance and Member Services Team, following correspondence with the Comptroller & City Solicitor and the Remembrancer, wrote to all Members to set out the new position as follows:

“The provisions of s.618 of the Housing Act 1985 which made it a criminal offence for a member to vote on housing management issues in relation to land in which they were beneficially interested have now been repealed. These provisions previously imposed an additional restriction on voting which could not be over-ridden by a dispensation.

The position now is that if a decision would engage a member’s disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) in land i.e. where the matter before the meeting could reasonably be said to appear to be likely to affect their DPI, or where a member of the public would consider that they might be influenced by their DPI, then it is likely that they will have a DPI in the matter being considered and may not speak or vote without a dispensation.

That means:

1. There are no restrictions on speaking or voting where a member does not have a DPI in the matter being considered.
2. If they do have a DPI in the matter being considered then current dispensations to speak and/or vote apply.
3. A member may seek a new dispensation to speak and/or vote, which will be considered according to the published criteria.
4. If in doubt they should seek advice.”

Members were also informed that, as a result of this change in legislation, our own governance document entitled ‘Policy and Guidance on the Granting of Dispensations’ which can be found on our public webpages would require a minor editorial change through the deletion of paragraphs 22 and 23, which referred to the now repealed provisions of section 618. The permission of the Comptroller & City Solicitor, in consultation with the Chief Commoner (as Chair of MDSSC) and the Chairman of Policy & Resources Committee, was duly sought to make this minor editorial change without further delay. Permission was granted and the amended version is now publicly available to all.

Members were further informed that similar tweaks would be required to our Standing Orders to delete the equivalent restriction on voting that mirrored section 618 (at SO44(2)). This Standing Order currently states that:-

2. If a matter for decision relating to the City of London Corporation's Housing or Barbican Residential Estates is under consideration by the Court, or any Committee thereof, which relates to land in which a Member has a beneficial interest they:-

(a) must declare the existence and nature of their interest;

(b) subject to the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and the Members' Code of Conduct in relation to interests may speak but not vote thereon.

Under SO44(1) Members would still be required to act in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and the Members' Code of Conduct where they have an interest.

Any proposal to amend Standing Orders must be considered by the Policy & Resources Committee whose recommendations shall be reported to the Court for approval. Thereafter, the Town Clerk is authorised to make the necessary amendments.

Officers considered that the use of urgency procedures in this case would provide for timely amendment of our relevant, internal, governance documents in order to provide consistency and clarity to all in terms of the new position on this matter.

REASON FOR URGENCY

There was potential for some confusion as to the City Corporation's internal position/guidance offered on this matter in delaying the updating of our relevant Corporate Governance documents until the next formal Court of Common Council meeting in March 2023 given that all elected Members have now been issued with a summary of the revised position and that the law around this has already changed. Many Members are keen to see our own documentation amended in line with the new legal position as soon as possible.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of both the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee resolved to recommend to the Court of Common Council that the necessary amendment to Standing Orders (e.g. the deletion of SO 44(2)) be made without further delay to reflect the current legal position following the repeal of subsections (3) and (4) of Section 618 of the Housing Act 1985.

Copies of background papers concerning this decision are available from the Town Clerk on request.

Contact:

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Committee(s): Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee	Date: 08/03/20224
Subject: Member Learning and Development Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	All
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so how much?	N/A
What is the source of funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department	N/A
Report of: Town Clerk and Chief Executive	For Decision
Report author(s) June Haynes, Member Services Officer	

Summary

This report provides the Sub-Committee with a further update in respect of the delivery of the Member Learning and Development programme to date, as outlined in the Members’ Learning and Development Strategy.

The content of the report is a reflection of the work undertaken since the last meeting of the Sub-Committee on 15th December 2023 including the delivery of Quarter 4 of the 2023/24 programme (January – March 2024) and preparations for Quarters 1 and 2 of the 2024/25 Civic Year. Under the structured rolling programme approved by your Sub-Committee, Quarter 4 focused on mental health and wellbeing. The sessions offered aimed to build mental resilience and support Members as they conduct their varied duties often in isolation of others. At the point of writing this report, no sessions arranged in Quarter 4 had taken place, therefore any evaluation of this quarter will be combined with the evaluation of Quarter 1 and formally presented to the Sub-Committee at the next meeting.

Officers have been working with colleagues, Chief Officers, and where relevant, external providers, to schedule offerings for Quarter 1 of this civic year (April to June 2024). These are now presented to the Sub-Committee for their comment and **approval**.

Looking even further ahead to allow for maximum input from this Sub-Committee as well as allowing ample notice of these sessions to be given to all Members, your

approval is also sought for the offerings in Quarter 2 (July-September 2024) at this stage.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- note the report and
- consider the content and direction proposed in respect of future offerings outlined for Quarter 1 (April to June 2024) and the potential offerings for Quarter 2 (July to September 2024).

Main Report

Background

1. At its meeting of 15th December 2023, the Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee endorsed proposals for Quarter 4 of its Member Learning and Development programme to be delivered from January – March 2024. The 4th quarter focused upon mental health and wellbeing. The Sub-Committee also agreed that moving forward any session with a delegate number less than 8 would trigger the cancelation of that session. An evaluation of the sessions offered will be combined with that of Quarter 1 at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee as the planned session scheduled to take place in advance of this meeting was cancelled due to the minimum number of 8 Members not being achieved. Your feedback as to the optimal length of sessions is also now reflected, with presenters now requested to deliver offerings in a 90 minute window.
2. The Programme for Quarter 1 of the new Civic Year (to be delivered in April-June 2024) will seek to respond to Members feedback and will focus on Information Technology and the enhancement of Members software skills.
3. Quarter 2 of the new civic year (July-September 2024) will acknowledge further Member feedback and aims to be more responsive to requests and to any emerging issues. The general focus will be ‘City specific’ and examine the varied leadership roles within the Court and how these roles are supported at community level.
4. As previously agreed, officers continue to investigate development opportunities, initially liaising with our inhouse colleagues to provide bespoke training solutions to reflect the Corporation’s unique arrangements. This can be demonstrated in the inhouse offering of the Members Mental Health Took Kit which has been designed specifically with Members in mind, as developed by Mental Health First Aid England and presented by the City of London Police. This offering would generally be delivered in a 4-hour session, however being mindful of Members time, and the views expressed by this Sub-Committee at its last meeting, this has been streamlined to a 90min session and will include signposting to City of London policies in addition to local and national policies. It is unfortunate that this session was cancelled due to a low response rate.
5. The Governance and Member Services Team seeks to work collaboratively across all internal departments and with external colleagues. We are currently

working with the Charities Review Team to deliver a session to be offered to all Members and Co-opted members, looking at the Natural Environment Charity review, this collaboration has allowed for the synchronisation of wider Member training information, the generic format of delivery and ultimately will inform Members feedback in a wider context.

Current Position

6. The table below sets out current offerings for Q4 (the quarter currently being delivered) as well as proposals for Q1 and broader headlines for Q2 and Q3.

2024	Theme/Focus
Q4	Health, Safety & Wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mental Health First Aid Kit (cancelled) - Mental Health for City of London Councillors
Q1.	IT Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IT and Microsoft Office Skill - Digital Social Media Training - Cyber Safety from the City of Lonon Police - Mod.Gov App training
Q2.	Roles within the Court <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role of the Alderman - Role of the Ward Deputy - Role of the Beadle - Role of Livery Companies The City and its Family of Schools
Q3.	Planning for Non Planning Committee Members Building Fire Safety (Planning)

Programme Outline for Quarter 1 – (April – June 2024)

7. The table below provides the Sub-Committee with further detail of the proposed sessions that are hoped to be delivered in Quarter 1 of the programme for 2024/25, and officers are now seeking your input to and final sign-off for this revised list of offerings as the previously scoped sessions have, for various reasons, fallen away.

Member Learning and Development Programme Quarter 1								
Q1 IT Skills	Date	Target Audience	Desired Outcome	Session Content	Presenter	Format	Recorded Y/N	Cost
IT and Microsoft Office Skills	18 th April or 8 th May	All Members	Improving/enhancing Members IT Skills and knowledge of Microsoft applications	Practical examples of how to use Microsoft software and associated programmes	Ellen Murphy	Hybrid	Y	In house
Digital Social Media Training	April – June	All Members	Building on social media awareness in a digital environment	Practical demonstrations and building awareness of benefits and pitfall of digital social media	Emily Tofield	Hybrid	Y	In house
Cyber Safety from the City of London Police	April – June This will be delivered on two separate occasions	All Members	The session is designed to raise Members' baseline level of knowledge of cyber-attack.	Baseline briefing providing accessible effective advice. Police officers will share intelligence trends and provide effective ways to keep you and your company safe from cyber-attack.	Oliver Bolton – City of London Police	Hybrid	Y	In house
Mod.Gov App training	April – June	All Members	Supporting your use of the Mod.Gov application	Interactive demonstrations on how to use the app with shortcuts and problem solving	Civica	Virtual	Y	External

Quarter 2 offering – (July - September 2024)

8. As agreed in principle at the last meeting of the Sub-Committee the content for Quarter 2 has been influenced by Members feedback and suggestions that they would like to see more City specific sessions delivered. Suggestions to date have included a focus on the Court of Aldermen, Ward Deputies, Beadles and Livery Companies, to better articulate these roles. At this point we are now seeking to finalise any Q2 offerings which would be delivered in July to

September of the programme, noting that this is a more condensed quarter given that Summer recess takes out all of August.

9. Officers continue to actively seek out and research relevant offerings to populate the entire programme and will approach internal officers, other London Boroughs and known, reliable networks to gain intelligence and signposting to previously highly rated providers. A working example of this was the engagement of the highly regarded Mr Ed Davie in the delivery of his Mental Health for Councillors session in Quarter 4. Mr Davie came recommended by the LGA and is well respected amongst other London local authorities. In addition to the scheduled offerings, there will remain the opportunity to react to L&D needs and to provide necessary updates in order to respond to changes in legislation and/or internal policy.

Members' Portal

10. The Portal is approaching the 6-month post launch mark. Following the Sub-Committee's comments at its last meeting, suggesting that the portal should be reviewed in an attempt to better reflect the needs and priorities of the target audience, officers have been working alongside a Member of the Sub-Committee in the first instance to look at what changes might be implemented. Further discussions are also set to take place with a selection of Members from the Digital Services Committee to seek their views on content and layout of the page, that they feel would best service their colleagues and peers.
11. The content and layout of the Portal page post discussions with this wider group of Members and any suggested changes will be implemented following consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman of the Sub-Committee. A demonstration of the proposed amended layout and content will be provided to the Sub-Committee at its next meeting.

Measurement and Analysis

12. Monitoring and analysis continues to form an important part of the delivery of the Member Development Strategy to ensure not only the appropriate use of resources, but to allow us to take forward learning to influence the future. We plan to deliver against this by reporting quarterly on the following metrics:
 - Course offerings for the previous quarter;
 - Course attendance figures;
 - Qualitative feedback for individual courses;
 - Budget and cost updates.
13. The latest update and evaluation of sessions that have taken place in Quarter 4 will be presented to the Sub Committee at its next meeting.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

Strategic Implications:

14. The profile of the L&D function, both internally and externally, demonstrates Members' commitment to ensuring that they have the relevant skills to deliver on all areas of the City's Corporate Plan, including the ambitions to embrace best practice and to deliver on value for money requirements, and to support

individuals to promote and cultivate communities within the organisation and amongst the City's resident population.

Financial Implications: -

15. The annual budget allocation of £9k made by the City Corporation for Member Learning and Development has and will continue to remain stable. To date the full expenditure from the 2023/2024 budget remains at £400 as notified at the last meeting of this Sub-Committee. A further £1,000 has been committed to in Q4 of this financial/Civic year. In previous years an additional allocation had been made of £11,000 from contingency funds. Any underspend will not be carried forward, resulting in a total budget allocation of £9k for the 2024/25 financial year.

Resource Implications

16. The practice and intention is to actively seek out internal expertise before engaging external presenters. In Quarter 4 officers have researched what is being delivered in terms of mental resilience training and have arranged a session with a presenter who comes highly recommended and is currently engaged by the LGA. The cost for the session including pre and post event preparation is £1,000 inc. This is the single budgetary spend in this quarter.

Risk Implications

17. The success of the Member Learning and Development Programme is reliant on Member engagement. If the offer is not sufficiently appropriate or engaging, objectives will not be met. If successful, the delivery of the Strategy ought to help mitigate against corporate risks across the organisation, with Members being better equipped to discharge their various responsibilities. To date the programme has, for the most part, been delivered according to plan, however member attendance remains a concern, since the last meeting attendance figures have not been revisited due to the scheduling of sessions. Officers welcome consideration and comments from the Sub Committee regarding how to increase attendance figure and improve Member interest moving forward.

Equalities Implications

18. Under the Equality Act 2010, all public bodies have a duty to ensure that when exercising their functions they have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and to take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people and encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. The proposals contained in this report do not have any potential negative impact on a particular group of people based on their protected characteristics. Instead, the strategy will ensure that the programme is accessible to all Members and would accommodate those requiring support to enable all delegates to have the same opportunities. Where possible, reasonable adjustments will be made to allow equality of access.

Climate Implications:

19. There are no climate implications arising from this report.

Security Implications:

20. There are no security implications arising from this report.

Conclusion

21. This report presents an update on the delivery to-date of the Member Learning and Development programme, and Members' are invited to comment and offer reflections and alterations to the offerings in Quarter 1 and considerations in terms of the headlines for Quarter 2.

Appendices

None

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New Member Induction

E-
Handbook

Briefing
Sessions

Visits

Receptions

2023-25
Strategy

SPEAK
FOR THE
CITY

E-Handbook

- Foreword from the Town Clerk & Chief Executive and Lead Members of the City Corporation
- Welcome to the Governance & Member Services Team
- The Corporate Plan
- Organisation Departmental Organigram
- Chief Officer Departmental Pages
- List of Grand Committees
- Information on decision Making and Member Services
- Committee Etiquette
- The City Corporation Governance Framework
- The City Corporation Financial Framework
- Internal Audit and Risk Management
- City Corporation Hospitality and Facilities
- Information regarding the Guildhall Complex
- Guidance for Members – The Freedom



Briefing Sessions

Series of briefing sessions (hybrid) and visits to be delivered between April and June (Quarter 1 of 2025 Civic Year) To include:

- Comptroller's Briefing – Code of Conduct/Member Behaviour – MANDATORY?
- Financial Briefing
- Governance Overview and Decision Making
- Training sessions (Licensing, Planning, use of IT)
- Political and Business Stakeholder engagement session
- Major Projects
- Key Corporate strategies (e.g. Corporate Plan, Lord Mayor, Climate Action Strategy, Destination City, equality diversity and inclusion)

Sessions to be recorded.



Visits

The following departments/institutions could be contacted in order to co-ordinate visits:

- Ward Visits?
- City Schools inc. GSMD
- Mansion House & the Old Bailey
- Markets
- Open Spaces
- City of London Police
- Barbican Centre
- Housing Estates



Receptions

- New Member Induction Briefing Day/Morning– 24 March 2025
- All Member Reception (hosted by the Chief Commoner) – April 2025
Afternoon Tea Scheduled for April 2025 (after CoCo) ?
- Policy Chair's Supper – ? May 2025
- Co-Opted Member Reception (hosted by the Chief Commoner)
To be explored



Future Development Programme

Training Programme to be drawn up based on MDSSC feedback from March 2024 and brought back for interrogation here.

In the meantime

- Future proof material so it remains up to date when casual vacancies are filled or when co-optees join the City of London.
- Consider how to creatively share more granular information about specific projects and areas of interest: e.g. Culture Mile; Staff Networks; Destination City; Mayoral Theme.



Considerations throughout

- Be innovative
- What should be available for all Members vs. New Members?
- What can be used for co-optees?
- How can the material be reused for new Members after 2025?
- Accessibility of resources
- Comms and consultation with candidates, Members and Officers
- Maintaining Business as Usual



Concerns, Risks and Mitigations

- Accessibility - Ensure all events are hybrid (except receptions)
- Timings – ensuring maximum engagement
- Staffing – Governance & Member Services – vacancies still exist so recruitment is to be prioritised
- Any Budgetary concerns/restrictions?



By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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