

<b>Committee(s):</b> Member Development and Standards Sub-Committee	<b>Date:</b> 24/10/2024
<b>Subject:</b> Member Behaviour Action Plan Update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk and Chief Executive	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author(s):</b> Polly Dunn Interim Assistant Town Clerk and Executive Director of Governance and Member Services	

### **Summary**

This report is a progress update on the Member Behaviour Action Plan and, noting the volume of workstreams allocated to the Member Services Team and the ambitious timeline proposed, a delegated authority is sought that would allow for the Town Clerk to progress certain items should it become apparent that further Member approvals are required.

### **Recommendation**

The Sub-Committee is invited to:

- i) note the progress made against the actions set out in Appendix 1; and
- ii) agree to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the whole Sub-Committee, to progress workstreams in the event that a sub-committee decision be required ahead of its next meeting (30 January 2025)

### **Main Report**

#### **Background**

1. An independent review into Member behaviour was conducted in 2023. Following extensive consultation with all Members on the outcome of this review, an action plan was developed to respond to all areas of concern. This action plan was considered by this Sub-Committee in July 2024, and subsequently approved by the Policy and Resources Committee in September 2024.
2. Appendix 1 sets out this action plan and provides an update against each workstream.

3. The plan is incredibly ambitious, with 17 actions, almost all of which have delivery dates of April 2025. Many are to be overseen by the same Team (Governance and Member Services).
4. The Sub-Committee is not set to meet until January 2025. In the interest of pace, a general delegated authority is sought in anticipation of any decisions required that, if left until your next meeting, could be detrimental to the final delivery date.
5. For the avoidance of any doubt, should the DA be deployed, all Members of the Sub-Committee would be consulted on any proposals, and we would provide ample opportunity for comment (minimum of one week). Should Members wish to call in the decision to the Sub-Committee meeting, it would be their prerogative to do so.
6. Similarly, if no decision is required before January, the delegated authority would simply fall away.
7. Members may choose to deny this request for delegated authority. The only implication is a potential risk of delayed delivery on some of the workstreams.

#### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

8. Ensuring progress against the Member Behaviour Action Plan ties in with outcomes from the People Strategy and Member Learning and Development Programme.

#### **Financial Implications**

9. None.

#### **Resource Implications**

9. No additional resource is currently required to deliver the outcomes.

#### **Legal Implications**

10. Members are asked to 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. Progress against these actions will help support the formal Standards framework.

#### **Risk Implications**

11. 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.
12. If successful, improved behaviours and relationships between Members, and between Members and Officers, should supplement delivery of the Strategy ought to help mitigate against corporate risks across the organisation, with Members being better equipped to discharge their various responsibilities.

## **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 and equality of opportunity for all. Officers will ensure that the Induction/Refresher offering is accessible to all Members and would accommodate those requiring additional support to enable all delegates to have the same opportunities. Wherever possible, reasonable adjustments will be made to allow equality of access.

### **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. This report sets out the positive action taken in response to the Member Behaviour Action plan in just the short period since its approval in September. Members' comments on progress are welcome, and their support in being agile in its delivery (via approval of a general delegated authority) is sought.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Member Behaviour Action Plan Update (October 2024)

### **Polly Dunn**

Interim Assistant Town Clerk and Executive Director of Governance and Member Services