

## Minutes of a meeting of the Standards Committee held on Thursday, 2 March 2017 in Committee Room 3 - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced      4.05 pm  
Concluded        4.45 pm

**Present – Councillors**

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
Townend	Jamil M Slater	J Sunderland

Non-Voting Co-opted Members

Parish Councillor Pitts and Town Councillor Westerman

Apologies: Councillor D Smith, Councillor Ferriby, Councillor Lal and Mr Shakeel

Councillor Jamil in the Chair

**9. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

No disclosures of interest in matters under consideration were received.

**10. MINUTES**

**Resolved –**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2016 be signed as a correct record.**

**11. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

**12. THE ROLE OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE IN RESPECT OF**



## **DISPENSATIONS TO VOTING MEMBERS**

The City Solicitor presented a report (**Document “A”**) which explained that, in her role as Monitoring Officer, she wished to make necessary amendments to the Constitution in order to make clear and explicit the role of the Committee in respect of granting dispensations to voting Members of Council, the Executive, Committees and Sub-Committees.

The City Solicitor stressed that the necessary processes were already in place for Members but that she considered that they were not explained or signposted clearly enough.

Members queried whether the information in the report reflected the legislation and whether a Member could be granted a dispensation for the whole of their term of office. In response the City Solicitor advised that the information did reflect the relevant legislation and that a dispensation could be granted for up to four years, depending on the circumstances.

She also advised that, in cases where a Member had been granted a dispensation, she would expect the Member to make that clear at the point in the meeting where disclosures of interest were called for.

### **Resolved –**

**That it be recommended to the Governance and Audit Committee that:-**

- (i) Article 11 of the Constitution be amended to include a new paragraph 11.4.8 to read “considering and deciding upon requests for dispensations from elected Members and Voting Co-opted Members.**
- (ii) Consequential renumbering of Article 11 be undertaken.**
- (iii) Part Two of the Members’ Code of Conduct include a new paragraph 24 entitled “Grant of Dispensations” setting out the provisions in paragraph 2.2 of this report and setting out the necessary process for requesting a dispensation.**
- (iv) Article 14 of the Constitution be amended to include consideration of dispensations within the functions of the Monitoring Officer in circumstances where it is not possible for the Standards Committee to consider a request.**

*Action: City Solicitor*

## **13. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS REPORT**



The City Solicitor presented a report (**Document “B”**) which provided the Committee with information to highlight the member development issues that the Council was addressing and a review on progress to date.

The report also advised on next steps on taking forward the member development agenda and invited Members to suggest other issues to pursue.

The Member Development Manager gave a detailed presentation in respect of the report, highlighting current priorities for development such as safeguarding in all its forms as well as child sexual exploitation, IT provision and personal safety/lone working.

A Member noted that training on the West Yorkshire Combined Authority had recently taken place and was informed that it had been regarded as a very useful session and would be repeated.

Another Member expressed concern that a recent training session which she had attended had not been of value to her and that she had not been clear what its purpose was or how it should impact on her role as a Councillor. She stated that her main concern was that member development should aim to join up the information being provided to the role of Councillors.

The City Solicitor and the Member Development Manager both concurred that a critical analysis was very helpful for future planning.

The same member then queried the use of an “app” for Member safety purposes rather than dialling 999 for the emergency services and was advised that it had been developed in response to requests from members and was an easy to use resource for dealing with both safety and location at the same time.

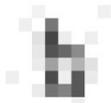
The Member noted that other issues on personal safety could also be addressed such as the issue of Members who did not have an office base or officer contact to make their whereabouts known.

One of the non-voting co-opted members on the Committee also voiced concern about personal safety issues for town & parish councillors and was critical of the training offered to town & parish councillors on CSE which he considered not to be stringent enough.

The Chair queried whether town & parish councillors could access member development in the same way as District Councillors and was advised that training on mandatory responsibilities such as the Code of Conduct was offered.

The Chair noted that the general feedback from the meeting was that training should be interactive wherever possible and expressed her own view that refresher training was important as Members had so much information to take on board when newly elected that it was difficult to assimilate it all.

She also requested that training on the use of social media be provided as it was



an increasingly popular method of communication among Members.

**Resolved –**

**That the report be noted.**

*ACTION: Member Development Manager*

Chair

**Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Standards Committee.**

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

