

Standards Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2012

Present: Independent Co-opted Members: Mr J Snadden – in the Chair - Mrs E Carmichael

City Councillors: Clayton, Evans, O'Callaghan, and Trotman

Apologies: Councillors Boyes and Taylor

ST/12/03 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the committee meeting held on 16 January 2012 as a correct record.

ST/12/04 Draft 2011/12 Annual Governance Statement

A report of the Chief Executive and City Treasurer was submitted which presented the draft Annual Governance Statement, which has been produced following completion of the annual review of the Council's governance arrangements and systems of internal control.

Decision

To note the findings of the Annual Governance Statement and the actions proposed to further develop or strengthen elements of the Council's governance arrangements during 2012/13.

ST/12/05 Localism Act 2011 – New Code of Conduct for Members and Arrangements to deal with Complaints

At its last meeting the Committee had considered a report which highlighted the changes to the standards regime and the new provisions brought about by the Localism Act 2011 and the need for the for a new code of conduct for members and new arrangements to deal with complaints to be in place by 1 July 2012.

The Committee also discussed the requirement for the Council to have in place arrangements for investigating and taking decisions on complaints, and what role a voluntary Standards Committee might have within those arrangements. Associated to that was the potential role of other independent persons as members of such a Standards Committee.

The Committee raised a number of concerns in relation to the changes in the new code, particularly in relation to the Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and the requirements for disclosure by Member's partners and the information contained within the declarations of interests which, as well as being available to view in the Town Hall, would also be available on the Council's website.

Members were assured that appropriate training would be arranged and that all members should be encouraged to attend in order to become fully aware of the new requirements in the New Code of Conduct for Members.

Decisions

To recommend to Constitutional and Nomination Committee the following:

- (1) that the Council adopts, with modifications, the Draft Code of Conduct for Members as set out at Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) that the Council adopts, with modifications, the Draft Arrangements for dealing with complaints about Members under the Code of Conduct for Members as set out at Appendix 2 of the report;
- (3) that the Council delegates to the Monitoring Officer to make arrangements for the recruitment and selection of at least two Independent Persons (whose appointment must then be approved by a majority of the Council);
- (4) that the Council should establish a Standards Committee, composed of 6 elected Members of Manchester City Council, 1 elected Member of Ringway Parish Council and 2 Co-opted Independent Members, and that the Council should delegate to Standards Committee the powers set out at Appendix 3 of the report;
- (5) that the Council should delegate to the Council's Monitoring Officer the powers set out at Appendix 4 of the report;
- (6) that the Council should request the Council's Monitoring Officer to make amendments to the Council's Procedure Rules at Part 4, Section A of the Council's 2012 Constitution in order to give effect to the requirements of the Council's Draft Code of Conduct for Members in relation to the notification and disclosure of interests and withdrawal from a Council meeting where a Member has either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or a Prejudicial Interest.