

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

7 MARCH 2024

PRESENT

Councillor K. Procter (in the Chair).

Councillors F. Cosby, P. Eckersley, W. Frass, S.J. Gilbert, E.R. Parker, H. K. Spencer, and D. Western.

Co-opted Members: Mr. C.E.J. Griffiths, Mr R. Brown, A. Rudden and Mr M. Whiting.

In attendance

Victoria Talbot Organisational Development and Learning Officer
Harry Callaghan Democratic Officer

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Zhi, W. Hassan and F. Hornby

11. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th March 2023, be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

12. OMBUDSMAN COMPLAINTS REPORT 2022/23

The Chair introduced the report in the absence of the Monitoring Officer. The Chair outlined that there was always room for improvement and provided some comments on the information contained in the report before asking Members if they had any questions.

Councillor Gilbert asked what circumstances the Council paid out for waste collections. The Head of Resources and Waste provided the response after the meeting via email. Each of the cases outlined in the report had been paid out due to repeated failure to collect bins on the scheduled day.

Mr. R. Brown asked if the report could include what the aggregated pay outs from complaints were. Following the meeting, the Governance Manager confirmed that this could be included if / when this report came to the Committee in the future.

Councillor Eckersley enquired as to what nominal payments meant and whether this could be included in future reports. The Governance Manager confirmed that this could also be included in future reports.

RESOLVED: That the content of the report be noted.

13. INDUCTION TRAINING FOR COUNCILLORS

The Organisational Development and Learning Officer spoke to the report which had been shared with the agenda. The report and appendices outlined the

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opportunities for Member development and the training prepared for incoming Councillors and came to the committee on an annual basis. The Officer shared several topics from the report from the past year including an overview of the E-Learning statistics for sitting Councillors, an increased focus on improving the key skills of Councillors in Planning and Licensing, and the future migration to 360 and SharePoint which will see a change to how things were shared with Councillors.

The Organisational Development and Learning Officer informed Members of the plans for induction of newly elected Councillors at the upcoming election. This included continuing processes which worked well last year, such as; a blended approach involving Northwest Employers and the Local Government Association (LGA), a welcome meeting with the Chief Executive of the Council, and inductions with each of the Council's Directorships as well as One Trafford and L&Q Housing Association. Furthermore, the Officer was monitoring the suite of training available and was looking to create a one stop shop on the Intranet for Councillors, all of which were being done with the Member Development Steering group.

The Chair thanked the officer for bringing this report and remarked that the opportunities were much improved on when he was first elected. The Chair enquired about the buddying system for new Councillors and the Members hub which had been mentioned in the report. The Organisational Development and Learning Officer responded that the hub was available on the learning and development page on the intranet, which involved tiles signposting Members to various areas of training. Regarding the buddying system, the Officer informed that Members this was something that worked well individually within the parties, with a document drafted by the steering group and shared with party leaders to ensure that new members had a buddy system in place.

Councillor Western remarked how fantastic they found the support now and noted how far it had come.

Mr. R. Brown was concerned about the level of Councillors who had completed safeguarding children training (16%). The Organisational Development and Learning Officer responded that the low number was often down to capturing data, with many Councillors completing this training in other walks of life, such as, as a School Governor. Members were encouraged to inform the officer if they complete this elsewhere and it would be added to the total.

Councillor Frass was aware that the Council received Councillors appointment of outside bodies and thought that this could be used to chase Councillors for the safeguarding training. Councillor Frass also wondered if it would be worth looking at Councillor's all-time data, so that, although not ideal, the Officer could see whether a Councillor had ever undertaken the training. The Officer responded that this data had been taken over the past 12-months but a look back at all time data could be undertaken. Mr. R. Brown agreed with Councillor Frass but felt that it was important that when related to safeguarding, it should be important to complete training on a year-by-year basis.

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Councillor Frass enquired as to whether training could be varied slightly with an occasional refresh, with possibly some Councillors who had been on the Council for some time, being apathetic to complete it again. The Organisational Development and Learning Officer responded that they had been looking at refreshing the course of GDPR, however, the training courses were often determined by legal requirements behind them and as such could not be changed considerably.

Councillor Spencer noted the reminders sent to Councillors across the year to complete training but felt the reminders could highlight what knowledge and information they may get from undertaking the training. The Organisational Development and Learning Officer agreed with the Member. The Officer shared that they could potentially provide party leads or Chairs of Committees with monthly updates on who had and had not completed training, who could then encourage their Members to complete.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the Organisational Development and Learning Officer consider suggestions from Members for training and induction for Councillors.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and finished at 7.03 pm

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