



Standards Committee

Monday 25 June 2012 at 7.00 pm
Committee Room 1, Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane,
Wembley, HA9 9HD

Membership:

Members

Independents:

Angela Ruotolo (Chair)
Sola Afuape (Vice-Chair)

first alternates

Sheila Darr
John Mann

second alternates

Councillors:

Beck
Colwill
Gladbaum

Lorber
HB Patel
Hossain

Brown
HM Patel
Harrison

For further information contact: Anne Reid, Principal Democratic Services
020 8937 1359, anne.reid@brent.gov.uk

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www.brent.gov.uk/committees

The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting

Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

Item **Page**

1 Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant financial or other interest in the items on this agenda.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting 1 - 4

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2011 are attached. The minutes of the meeting that took place on 2 May 2012 will follow.

3 Matters arising (if any)

4 Annual review of the Member Development Programme May 2011 - April 2012 5 - 10

The purpose of this report is to review the Member Development Programme. The report outlines the development sessions delivered for members since May 2011 including tailored role development sessions, technical skills development and personal skills development. This report also outlines some future plans for the programme, including a series of 'drop-in' sessions to help prepare members for the move to the Civic Centre, community engagement sessions including ward working projects and community safety, and an event looking at the 'councillors as school governor' role including the wider issue of probity in schools.

Ward Affected: All Wards **Contact Officer:** Rhiannon Leary,
Mayor's Office and Member
Development Manager
Tel: 020 8937 1158
rhiannon.leary@brent.gov.uk

5 New Standards regime under Localism Act 11 - 24

A report to update the Committee on the implications of the Localism Act 2011 and the regulations published on 8th June 2012 setting out the new Code of Conduct and advice on pecuniary interests.

Ward Affected: All Wards **Contact Officer:** Fiona Ledden,
Director of Legal and Procurement

Tel: 020 8937 1292
fiona.ledden@brent.gov.uk

6 Application to remove political restriction

25 - 36

Following changes to legislation under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 the responsibility for considering and making exemptions in respect of posts that are politically restricted became the responsibility of the Standards Committee, previously the responsibility of the Independent Adjudicator.

Ward Affected: All Wards **Contact Officer:** Fiona Ledden,
Director of Legal and Procurement
Tel: 020 8937 1292
fiona.ledden@brent.gov.uk

7 Sub-Committee membership changes (if any)

8 Any Other Urgent Business

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Democratic Services Manager or his representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 64.



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- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.
 - Toilets are available on the second floor.
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 - A public telephone is located in the foyer on the ground floor, opposite the Porters' Lodge

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LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE Tuesday, 6 December 2011 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Angela Ruotolo (Chair) and Councillors Colwill and Gladbaum

Apologies were received from: Councillor Beck and Sola Afuape

1. **Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None declared.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 September 2011 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. **Matters arising (if any)**

None.

4. **The Localism Act 2011 and the provisions regarding members' conduct**

The Borough Solicitor, Fiona Ledden, advised that the Localism Act 2011 received Royal Assent on 15 November 2011 and introduced new arrangements for members' conduct. The provisions were not yet in force and a date had not yet been set although it was suggested it may be April 2012. The report before members outlined the major changes to the standards and members' conduct arrangements although provisions of the Act were still unclear and also how it would translate into the Standards regime. The Borough Solicitor advised that a national code that could be used by other authorities was being drafted and would be circulated for comment. The aim was for a Standards regime that was both transparent and consistent. Fiona Ledden also advised that she had earlier in the day received correspondence from the interim Chief Executive of Standards for England advising that they would no longer be carrying out investigations after 31 January 2012, and outstanding cases would be referred back to the local authorities concerned. Cases currently before the First Tier Tribunal would remain there for consideration and decision.

In discussion members expressed a preference for similar arrangements to those currently in operation noting that the question of sanctions had to be resolved. It was noted that once the regulations were available they would be circulated and a special meeting the Standards Committee convened if necessary.

RESOLVED:

that the report be noted.

5. Annual Report of the Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer's Annual Report for the period May 2010 to April 2011 provided an update on member conduct issues which included the review of the Register of Gifts and Hospitality and the Register of Member's Interests. The Borough Solicitor in introducing the report and referring to the Register of Gifts and Hospitality advised that a further two declarations should have been highlighted as having been submitted outside the time limit, making a total of ten. The committee felt that one member in particular would possibly benefit from a further reminder session on the requirements for making declarations. It was noted that all members had been advised of the importance of declaring interests and also subsequently reminded.

RESOLVED:

that the report be noted.

6. Review of Members' Expenses - April 2010 to April 2011

The Mayor's Office and Member Development Manager introduced the report which outlined expenses claimed under the Members' Allowance Scheme over the period April 2010 to April 2011. Members were advised that that concerns expressed last year had been conveyed to the political group offices and were pleased to note that there had been a decrease in car usage and an increase in train and tube travel and even cross-party car share.

RESOLVED

that the report be noted.

7. Sub-Committee membership changes (if any)

None.

8. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on 13 March 2012. A special meeting may be convened in February 2012 should the draft Standards regulations become available. It was also noted that arrangements were being made for the annual Standards Network Event to take place in January 2012.

9. **Any Other Urgent Business**


Season's Greetings

The Chair expressed her good wishes to all for the Season and the New Year.

The meeting closed at 7.35 pm

ANGELA RUOTOLO
Chair

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	<p style="text-align: center;">Standards Committee 25 June 2012</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Report from the Mayor's Office and Member Development Manager</p>
<p>For Information Wards Affected: NONE</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Annual Review of the Member Development Programme May 2011 – April 2012</p>	

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to review the Member Development Programme. The report outlines the development sessions delivered for members since May 2011 including tailored role development sessions, technical skills development and personal skills development. An 18 month review of the programme's three year Charter accreditation is underway, conducted by South East Employers (SEE), the organisation now responsible for London boroughs' Charter accreditation. A verbal update on the review will be presented to members at the meeting.

This report also outlines some future plans for the programme, including a series of 'drop-in' sessions to help prepare members for the move to the Civic Centre, community engagement sessions including ward working projects and community safety, and an event looking at the 'councillors as school governor' role including the wider issue of probity in schools.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note this report.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Development events May 2011 – April 2012:

A number of member development events were held during the 2011-2012 municipal year. These have been delivered by a combination of external trainers, internal officers and partners:

- Transport for London (TfL) briefing – 16 June 2011;
- Complaints awareness training – 20 June 2011;
- Time management and coping with stress – 27 June 2011;
- Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing Committee training – 30 June 2011;
- Brent Placemaking Guide – 14 July 2011;
- Health and safety training 21 July 2011;
- Performance management training 25 July 2011;
- Outlook training – 13 and 26 September 2011;
- Conflict resolution training – 24 October 2011;
- Equalities training (Executive member) – 31 October 2011;
- Assessing policies and strategies – 10 November 2011;
- Equalities training (Labour Non-Executive member) – 15 November 2011;
- Charing Skills in Local Government – 24 November 2011;
- West London Waste Authority – 12 January 2012;
- Safeguarding Adults briefing – 30 January 2012;
- I.T. Microsoft Word basic training – 16 February 2012;
- Safeguarding children and corporate parenting – 26 March 2012;
- Equalities training (Liberal Democrat group) – 2 April 2012;
- Housing Benefit: changes to the system – 16 April 2012;
- Equalities training (Conservative group) – 24 April 2012.

Further scheduled sessions:

- 10 July 2012 – The Procurement Challenge
- June/July 2012 Civic Centre ‘drop-in’ sessions
- 31 July 2012 – Councillors as school governors: probity in schools.

3.2 Personal Development Plan reviews:

36 councillors took up the opportunity to have a personal development plan (PDP) interview in 2010. All PDP interviews were conducted by an external consultant who then produced individual personal development plans, agreed by each member who took part in the process. The process was kept confidential to allow members the opportunity to discuss any issues in confidence.

The following areas were identified as common areas of development.

- Public speaking/communication skills;
- Dealing with large amounts of paperwork/time management;
- Scrutiny (of council policy and performance);
- IT training;
- Charing skills;

It was also identified that there were potential benefits to shadowing officers from the council and other partner organisations to gain a greater understanding of work in a particular area, for example housing and planning.

These development needs were taken into account for the events which took place from May 2011 to April 2012 and will continue to be met through the rolling programme.

3.3 Attendance at external events May 2011 – April 2012:

The number of external events attended by members was 18, whilst the number of members attending external events was also 18. Several members attended more than one external event. Due to the current financial climate and the consequent financial constraints on the programme, the cost of external events remains a factor in determining whether it is appropriate for members to attend. Members have been encouraged to attend free external events or events which are at a minimal cost. The cost of only one external event during the past municipal year may be regarded as significant, and this was the Local Government Association (LGA) annual conference, an event which it was entirely appropriate for the Leader of the Council to attend.

At no time did members fail to attend courses on which they had been booked or cancel at short notice. There was one occasion when a councillor was unable to attend an event on which they had been booked; however this event was free and ample notice was also given to the organiser therefore there was no financial penalty.

3.4 Feedback from members regarding the member development programme:

Feedback is sought from members following every training event attended, both internal and external. The majority of feedback received after attendance at internal events during the past year has been largely positive, for example strong appreciation was shown of the training session which examined new legislation likely to impact housing benefit claimants. Feedback has also included constructive proposals for future events. Significantly fewer members submitted feedback following their attendance at external events, although when such feedback is received, this too has been largely positive.

3.5 Political support:

The member development steering group (MDSG) met on a quarterly basis during the past municipal year and has consistently provided constructive input and evaluation during this time. A strong political lead on member development from all groups is essential to ensure member ownership of the programme and to improve future

attendance and participation in the programme, and in this respect input from the steering group remains vital. Member development events are often well attended by experienced senior members (including members of the Executive) which demonstrates an excellent example to other members who may be less experienced in the councillor role.

The member development steering group combined with the ward working reference group during the previous municipal year (2010-2011) after members and officers agreed these two groups could be a more efficient tool when working as a single entity given the overlapping nature of the groups' agendas and membership. This arrangement has worked well and has been found to be an efficient use of member and officer time.

3.6 Constraints

Time constraints of councillors:

As has been identified in previous years, time constraints remain a problem for members. There are rarely more than one or two dates available each month for member development sessions, with the exception of the August recess during which time no sessions are held. In addition, during the past municipal year the GLA elections (held in May 2012) had a negative impact on member availability and consequently fewer member development sessions were held than anticipated at the outset of the year. Each session, which takes place in the evening, lasts between two and three hours and includes time for members to ask questions.

It is possible to schedule development sessions during the day and some of the Civic Centre 'drop-in' sessions will be scheduled during the daytime, but a greater overall reliance on day time sessions is not recommended given a number of members are fully employed and consequently would be unable to attend.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The costs of the member development programme are met from a budget of £15,072. A significant proportion of the events in the programme over the last year have been delivered internally by council officers, which has helped to keep the costs down.

The possibility of sharing training events and training providers with other boroughs has been considered and a meeting was held with counterparts in Harrow to discuss shared training opportunities. A training session arranged by Harrow officers designed to develop members' assertiveness skills was put forward as a joint opportunity; however it conflicted with a member development date already scheduled in Brent on the same evening and consequently Brent

members were not available to attend. The London Member Development Network (LMDN) was also contacted with a view to exploring joint commissioning of training providers. The LMDN has scheduled a meeting for 3 July when this issue will be discussed in further detail.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 None.

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 Officers believe that there are no specific diversity implications in this report.

For further information please contact:

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Standards Committee 25 June 2012

**Report from Fiona Ledden
Director of Legal and Procurement
Department**

New Standards regime under Localism Act

1. Summary

A report to update the Committee on the implications of the Localism Act 2011 and the regulations published on 8th June 2012 setting out the new Code of Conduct and advice on pecuniary interests.

2. Recommendation

That the committee

- 2.1 Note the implications of the Localism Act 2011 and in particular that it places an obligation on the council to promote and maintaining high ethical standards by its members and co-opted members
- 2.2 Agree that Full Council be recommended to appoint two “independent persons”, and authorise the Director of Legal and Procurement to carry out the recruitment process for those independent persons
- 2.3 Agree that Full Council be recommended to adopt the draft Code of Conduct for Members set out in Appendix 1 to this report, including any changes agreed by this committee
- 2.4 Consider what (if any) sanctions should be recommended to Full Council in relation to members found to be in breach of the new Code of Conduct.
- 2.5 Agree to recommend to Full Council that authority be given to the Director of Legal and Procurement to take decisions in relation to dispensations, as set out in the draft Code of Conduct
- 2.6 Authorise the Director of Legal and Procurement following consultation with the Constitution Working Group to draw up and agree detailed procedures to support the Code of Conduct and the new standards regime, including detailed powers and duties, and terms of reference for the proposed new Standards Committee
- 2.7 Note the advice note from the Monitoring Officer to be sent to all members in relation to the definition of Pecuniary Interests attached as Appendix 2.
- 2.8 Note that, if the recommendation to create a new Standards Committee is accepted by Full Council, Standards Committee will review and refine the detailed procedures and operation of the new regime at its meeting during the 2012/13 municipal year.

3. Reasons for Decision and Options Considered

- 3.1 The Localism Act 2011 received Royal Assent on 15th November 2011 which included changes to the arrangements for Members' Code of Conduct and standards matters. The Government issued guidance and regulations on 8th June 2012 setting out rules regarding pecuniary interests and maintenance of a register of interests.

4. Duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct

- 4.1 The Act places an obligation on the council to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-optees.
- 4.2 A co-opted Member is defined as an unelected person who is also a Member of a Committee or Sub-Committee or Council representative on a joint Committee or joint Sub-Committee and who is entitled to vote on any question which falls to be decided any of these meetings.
- 4.3 For future meetings of the Standards Committee any independent members will be non-voting co-opted member of the committee.

5. Duty to have a Code of Conduct

- 5.1 In promoting and maintaining high standards, the council must adopt a Code of Conduct for members and co-optees when they are acting in that capacity (i.e. as a member or co optee). The Code adopted by the council should not cover private issues.
- 5.2 The Council's Code must cover the following 7 principles specified in the Act:
- Selflessness
 - Integrity
 - Objectivity
 - Accountability
 - Openness
 - Honesty
 - Leadership

6. Registration of interests

- 6.1 The council must ensure that its Code of Conduct includes provisions for the registration in a register, and disclosure of:-
- Pecuniary interests, and
 - Non pecuniary interests
- 6.2 The council's Monitoring Officer must establish and maintain a register of interests. That register must be available for public inspection and published on the council's website.

7. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

- 7.1 A member or co-optee must, before the end of 28 days from date of election to office or appointment as a co-optee, notify the Monitoring Officer of any disclosable pecuniary interests.
- 7.2 A pecuniary interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest in relation to a person (as specified in regulations) and either –
- It is the Member or co-optee's interest, or
 - It is an interest of:
 - A member's or co-optee's spouse or civil partner

- A person with whom a member or co-optee is living as husband and wife, or
- A person with whom a Member or co-optee is living as if they were civil partners, and
- The Member or co-optee is aware that the other person has the interest.

8. Disclosure of pecuniary interest at meetings

- 8.1 If a Member or co-optee is present at a meeting and has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter under consideration, if the interest has not been registered they must disclose it at the meeting. The Member or co-optee may not participate in the discussions or vote on the matter.
- 8.2 The Council's constitution may make provisions for the exclusion of a Member or co-optee from a meeting while discussion and voting takes place.

9. Sensitive Interests

- 9.1 Where a Member or co-optee has an interest, the disclosure of which the Monitoring Office believes could subject the Member or co-optee to violence or intimidation, the interest should not be placed on the public register. Instead, the register would simply say that the Member or co-optee has an interest, the details of which are withheld under s32 (2) of the Localism Act 2011. This also applies to an interest of 'any person connected' with the Member or co-optee.

10. Dispensations

- 10.1 The council (or its nominated body or person) may, on written request from a Member or co-optee, grant a dispensation to relieve the applicant from the restrictions on participation and voting. Dispensation may be granted if:-

- Without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating would be so great a proportion to impede the effectiveness of the meeting
- The representation of different political groups would be affected and likely to alter the likely outcome of any voting at the meeting
- Granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Borough
- Every Member of the Council's executive will be precluded from participating in the meeting
- It is appropriate to grant a dispensation

Dispensation may be granted for up to 4 years. A dispensation will mean that the Member or co-optee to whom it is granted can speak and vote on a matter in which they have a relevant interest.

11. Breach of the Code of Conduct

- 11.1 As the Act puts the council under a legal obligation to have a Code of Conduct, it follows that the council must put in place arrangements to deal with complaints about alleged breaches of its Code.
- 11.2 Section 34 of the Act makes it a *criminal offence* without reasonable excuse for a Member or co-optee to fail to comply with the requirements on disclosure of pecuniary interests. Complaints under this provision should be made to and handled by the Police

- 11.3 A person found guilty is liable to a conviction in the Magistrates Court and a fine not exceeding level 5 (currently £5000). The Magistrates Court are also given the power to disqualify a person from office for a period not exceeding 5 years.
- 11.4 The Act does not provide for sanctions for breach of the Code to be imposed by the council, therefore any findings of a breach would need to be addressed by way of powers that the council has available to it already. For example, public censure, or removal from a committee, apology and/or training.

12. Independent Person

- 12.1 The Act requires each local authority to appoint at least one independent person, whose views should be sought and taken into account before the Council takes a decision in relation an allegation that it has decided to investigate. The views of the independent person(s) may also be sought by the member or co-optee about whom the complaint has been made.
- 12.2 The transitional regulations allow for the appointment of previous independent members of the authority provided they are not members of the authority on the 1st of July 2012.

13. Standards Committee

- 13.1 The Localism Act abolishes the requirement for the council to have a standards committee, although the council has the power to set up a Standards Committee under other legislation. If the council were not to have a standards committee then it would need to put in place some other mechanism to operate and oversee the operation of this Code of Conduct for Members.
- 13.2 A new Standards Committee will need to be politically balanced, although it could include non-councillors. However, those non-councillors would have the status of co-optees and would be unable to vote. Because of this, any future standards committee would have to be chaired by an elected Member. The ordinary rules on access to information and meetings would apply to work of the Committee.

14. Standards for England

- 14.1 The Localism Act has abolished Standards for England.

15. Key implications

- 15.1 A proposed draft Code of Conduct is set out in the Appendix of this report. This draft Code has been produced following detailed work by a working group of this committee. The draft Code aims to preserve the best of the council's existing Code, whilst taking on board the requirements and new priorities of the Localism Act. It should be noted that the Localism Act does not prescribe any of the provisions of the proposed new code of Conduct, save for those relating to the General Principles, dispensations, sensitive interests, and most of those relating to Members Interests. The proposed new Code of Conduct goes considerably further (in terms of standards required of Brent members) than is required by law. The new Code of Conduct will need to be adopted by Full Council.
- 15.2 Disclosure of pecuniary interest: The Director of Legal and Procurement will produce a new form and guidance for members. It is proposed that the council agree that members leave a meeting when they have declared a pecuniary interest, and the draft Code provides for this. It is also recommended that members be required to notify and keep up to date their

interests on the Register, even though the Act requires only that interests be registered at the time of election and updated in the event that the member is required to make a declaration during the course of a meeting.

- 15.3 Dispensations: it is proposed that, by reason of the likely time constraints involved, authority be delegated to Director of Legal and Procurement to deal with dispensation requests. Where the Director of Legal and Procurement is undecided on the best response, and time is not of the essence, the decision could be passed to Standards Committee for decision.
- 15.4 Any alleged breach of the registration of interest's rules should be reported to the police. However a Committee may deal with alleged breach of other parts of the Code of Conduct. The independent person(s) must be consulted before deciding to investigate a complaint. It is recommended that the Council delegate authority to Director of Legal and Procurement to carry out initial filtering of complaints.
- 15.5 Independent Person: it is recommended that the Council appoints 2 Independent persons, in order to provide some flexibility with regard to availability
- 15.6 Standards Committee: it is recommended that the council sets up a new Standards Committee, to implement and/or oversee the implementation of the standards requirements of the Localism Act. It is further recommended that the Director of Legal and Procurement draw up draft duties for that committee and, following consultation with the chair of the current Standards Committee, recommend these to full council for approval.
- 15.7 Sanctions: the Act prescribes criminal prosecution in respect of breach by members of the provisions within the Code of Conduct relating to registration or declaration of pecuniary interests. However, sanctions for breach of other sections of the Code of Conduct are a matter for the council itself to decide.
- 15.8 Because of the lack of statutory force, the council's options are now much more limited than was previously the case. Effectively, options include only censure by Full Council, or a recommendation to Full Council that a member be removed from membership of a particular council body – such as a committee. In addition requirement can be made either for an apology from a member or for training.

16. Financial

- 16.1 There is currently no budget specifically allocated to administration of the standards regime at the council. The workload arising from standards is relatively low, and generally easily absorbed within the workload of the Legal and Procurement Department. However, the demand on resources inevitably increases on occasions when several investigations are in progress at the same time.

17. Legal

- 17.1 Throughout 2011, the council was obliged to have a standards committee and to ensure that that committee carries out certain specified tasks, as set out in the Local Government Act 2000 and related statutory instruments. The committee must have an independent chair and contain some other independent members.

17.2 The implications of the Localism Act 2011 are set out within the body of the report. It will no longer be a legal requirement that the council has a standards committee, although the council will be required to have a Code of Conduct for its members. The form of that Code of Conduct is not prescribed by the Act, and many of the provisions being recommended within the draft Code of Conduct at the Appendix to this report are not required by the Act – although the council has the legal power to decide to adopt them in any event.

18. Staffing Implications

None

19. Diversity Implications

None

Background Information:

Localism Act 2011

Brent Council's Constitution

Localism Act 2011 (Commencement No. 6 and Transitional, Savings and Transitory Provisions) Order 2012

Fiona Ledden
Director of Legal and Procurement

BRENT COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

PART 1

Introduction and interpretation

1. (1) This code applies to **you** as a member of Brent Council.
- (2) It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code
- (3) In this Code –

“meeting” means any meeting of –

- (a) Full council;
- (b) The Executive;
- (c) Any of the council's or its Executive's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees;

“member” includes a co-opted member and an appointed member.

Scope

2. (1) Subject to sub-sections (2) and (5), you must comply with this Code whenever you –
 - (a) Conduct the business of the council (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or
 - (b) Act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of the council,and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly.
- (2) Subject to sub-sections (3) and (4), this Code does not have effect in relation to your conduct other than where it is in your official capacity.
- (3) In addition to having effect in relation to conduct in your official capacity, section 5 also has effect at any other time, where that conduct constitutes a criminal offence for which you have been convicted.
- (4) Conduct to which this Code applies (whether that is conduct in your official capacity or conduct mentioned in sub-section (3) includes a criminal offence for which you are convicted (including an offence you committed before the date you took office, but for which you are convicted after that date).
- (5) Where you act as a representative of the council –
 - (a) on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct, or
 - (b) on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with Brent Council's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject

PART 2

High standards of conduct

3. You must maintain a high standard of conduct, and comply with the following general conduct principles:

The General Principles

Selflessness – you should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Integrity – you should not place yourself in situations where your integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity – you should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability – you should be accountable to the public for your actions and the manner in which you carry out your responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to your particular office.

Openness – you should be as open as possible about your actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Honesty – you should be truthful in your council work and avoid creating situations where your honesty may be called into question.

Leadership – you should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

General Obligations

4. (1) You must treat others with respect.

(2) You must not –

(3) (a) do anything which may cause the council to breach any of the equality enactments (as defined in section 33 of the Equality Act 2006);

(b) Bully any person;

(c) Intimidate or attempt any person who is or is likely to be –

(i) A complainant,

(ii) A witness, or

(iii) Involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings,

in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with the council's code of conduct; or

(d) Do anything which comprises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the council.

5. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or the council into disrepute.

6. You must not –

(a) disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information

acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where –

- (i) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it.
 - (ii) you are required by law to do so;
 - (iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
 - (iv) The disclosure is –
 - (aa) in all the circumstances
 - (bb) in the public interest; and
 - (cc) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the council; or
- (b) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

7. You –

- (a) Must not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage, and
- (b) Must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the council –
 - (i) Act in accordance with the council's reasonable requirements;
 - (ii) Ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes)

8. (1) when reaching decisions on any matter you must have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by –

- (a) The council's chief finance officer; or
 - (b) The council's Director of Legal and Procurement, where that officer is acting pursuant to his or her statutory duties.
- (2) You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by the council.

PART 3

Interests

Pecuniary interests and registration

9. (1) For the purposes of this Code, a pecuniary interest is a "disclosable pecuniary interest" in relation to a person ("M") if it is of a description specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State and either –

- (a) It is an interest of M's, or
 - (b) It is an interest of –
 - (i) M's spouse or civil partner,
 - (ii) A person with whom M is living as husband and wife, or
 - (iii) A person with whom M is living as if they were civil partners, and M is aware that that other person has the interest.
- (2) Subject to section 11, you must, within 28 days of your election or appointment to office, notify the Director of Legal and procurement of any disclosable pecuniary interests which you have at the date when the notification is given

- (3) Subject to section 11, you must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new disclosable pecuniary interest or change to any pecuniary interest registered under sub section (2), notify the Director of Legal and Procurement of that change or new interest
- (4) The Director of Legal and Procurement will maintain the council's register of interests, and enter onto that register all interests notified to him/her

Disclosure of pecuniary interests

10. (1) Sub sections (2) and (4) apply to you if you –
- (a) Are present at a meeting of the council or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee, Executive or Executive subcommittee meeting,
 - (b) Have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered, or being considered, at the meeting, and
 - (c) Are aware that the condition in paragraph (b) is met.
- (2) If the interest is not entered in the council's register, you must disclose the interest to the meeting, but this is subject to section 11.
- (3) If the interest is not entered in the council's register and is not the subject of a pending notification, you must notify the Director of Legal and Procurement of the interest before the end of 28 days beginning with the date of the disclosure.
- (4) You may not –
- (a) participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting, or
 - (b) participate in any vote, or further vote, taken on the matter at the meeting,
 - (c) remain in the meeting during the duration of any discussion of the matter but this is subject to section 11.
- (5) Sub sections (6) and (7) apply if –
- (a) a function of the may be discharged by a member acting alone,
 - (b) you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be dealt with, or being dealt with, by you in the course of discharging that function, and
 - (c) you are aware that the condition in sub section (6) (b) is met.
- (6) If the interest is not entered in the Council's register and is not the subject of a pending notification, you must notify the Director of Legal and Procurement of the interest before the end of 28 days beginning with the date when you become aware that the condition in sub section (6) (b) is met in relation to the matter.
- (7) You must not take any steps, or any further steps, in relation to the matter (except for the purpose of enabling the matter to be dealt with otherwise than by you).
- (8) Where you give a notification for the purposes of sub sections (3) and (7), the Director of Legal and Procurement will enter the interest notified in the Council's register (whether or not it is a disclosable pecuniary interest).
- (9) You will be excluded from a meeting while any discussion or vote takes place in which, as a result of the operation of sub section (4), you may not participate.
- (10) for the purpose of this section, an interest is "subject to a pending notification" if –
- (a) under this section or section 11, the interest has been notified to the Director of Legal and Procurement, but
 - (b) that interest has not yet been entered in the council's register in

consequence of that notification.

Sensitive interests

11. (1) Sub sections (2) and (3) apply where –
- (a) You have an interest (whether or not a disclosable pecuniary interest), and
 - (b) The nature of the interest is such that both you, and the Director of Legal and Procurement, consider that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to you, or a person connected with you, being subject to violence or intimidation.
- (2) If the interest is entered in the council's register, copies of the registers that are made available for inspection, and any published version of the register, must not include details of the interest (but may state that you have an interest the details of which are withheld under this subsection).
- (3) If section 10(2) applies in relation to the interest, that provision is to be read as requiring you to disclose not the interest but merely the fact that you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in the matter concerned.

Dispensations

12. (1) The Director of Legal and Procurement may, on written request made by you, grant a dispensation relieving you from either or all of the restrictions in section 10(4) in cases described in the dispensation.
- (2) The Director of Legal and Procurement may grant you a dispensation under this section only if, after having had regard to all relevant circumstances, s/he –
- (a) considers that without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited by section 10(4) from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business
 - (b) Considers that without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business.
 - (c) Considers that granting the dispensation is in the interest of persons living in the authority's area
 - (d) considers that granting the dispensation each member of the Executive would be prohibited by section 10(4) from participating in any particular business to be transacted by the Executive, or
 - (e) considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.
- (3) A dispensation under this section must specify the period for which it has effect, and the period specified may not exceed four years.
- (4) Section 10(4) does not apply in relation to anything done for the purpose of deciding whether to grant a dispensation under this section.

PART 4 Miscellaneous

Related documents

13. The council has adopted other codes and protocols which do not form part of this Code but which deal with specific activities you may be required or wish to carry out in the course of your duties as a councillor. You are required to comply with the latest version of these from time to time and any breach may be regarded as a breach of this Code. The following codes and protocols are currently in effect:

- (1) Code of Conduct for Members in relation to Planning Matters
- (2) Code of Conduct for Members in relation to Licensing Matters
- (3) Use of Information Technology: Guidance on the Brent's Local Code of Conduct for members
- (4) Convention on Working Relations

Guidance

14. If you need further advice or guidance on interpretation of this Code, please contact:

Fiona Ledden, Director of Legal and Procurement; Ext: 1292 or
Kathy Robinson, Senior Lawyer, Ext: 1368

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

Breaching those parts in **red** is potentially a criminal offense

Helpful Reminders for Members

- *Is your register of interests up to date?*
- *In particular have you declared to the Borough Solicitor all disclosable pecuniary interests?*
- *Have you checked the register to ensure that they have been transcribed correctly?*

When should you declare an interest at a meeting?

- **What matters are being discussed at the meeting?** (including Council, Executive, Committees, Subs, Joint Committees and Joint Subs); or

Does the business to be transacted at the meeting

- **relate to; or**
- **likely to affect**

any of your registered interests and in particular any of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests?

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests shall include your or interests of :

- your spouse or civil partner's
- a person you are living with as husband/ wife
- a person you are living with as if you were civil partners and you are aware that this other person has the interest

What is a Non-Pecuniary interest? – this is an interest which is not pecuniary (as defined) but is nonetheless so significant that a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard to be so significant that it would materially impact upon your judgement of the public interest,

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest? – see attached description

Pecuniary

Non-pecuniary

If the interest is not already in the register you must (unless the interest has been agreed by the Borough Solicitor to be sensitive) disclose the existence and nature of the interest to the meeting

Declare the nature and extent of your interest including enough detail to allow a member of the public to understand it's nature

If the Interest is not entered in the register and is not the subject of a pending notification you must within 28 days notify the Borough Solicitor of the interest for inclusion in the register

Unless you have received dispensation upon previous application from the Borough Solicitor, you must:

- Not participate or participate further in any discussion of the matter at a meeting;
- Not participate in any vote or further vote taken at the meeting; and
- leave the room while the item is being considered/voted upon

If you are an Executive Member you may make arrangements for the matter to be dealt with by another member of the Executive but take no further steps

You may participate and vote in the usual way

Pecuniary Interests

Employment, office, trade, profession or vacation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	<p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from London Borough of Brent) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. Please note where there is any reference to the word "you/your" this also includes those people such as your spouse or civil partner's, a person you are living with as husband/wife, a person you are living with as if you were civil partners and you are aware that this other person has the interest.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992</p>
Contracts	<p>Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the London Borough of Brent -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and(b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the London Borough of Brent.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the London Borough of Brent for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) the landlord is the London Borough of Brent; and(b) the tenant is a body in which you have a beneficial interest.
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and(b) either -<ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Please note where there is any reference to the word "you/your" this also includes those people such as your spouse or civil partner's, a person you are living with as husband/wife, a person you are living with as if you were civil partners and you are aware that this other person has the interest.



Standards Committee 25 June 2012

Report from Director of Legal and Procurement

Wards Affected:
ALL

Application to remove Political Restriction

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Following changes to legislation under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 the responsibility for considering and making exemptions in respect of posts that are politically restricted became the responsibility of the Standards Committee, previously the responsibility of the Independent Adjudicator.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That in light of the application received from a member of staff consideration is given that the political restriction in respect of the posts of Political Assistant be exempted from the provisions.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Under Part 1 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 a provision was brought in for certain posts to be politically restricted. This usually applies to members of staff who earn over £37,000 per annum or who attend and advise committee regularly or who deal with the press by way of providing press briefings on behalf of the Council on a regular basis. In addition there are specific posts listed including Political Assistant posts. These restrictions were brought in to prevent employment of politicians to high paying executive posts, and to ensure transparency.
- 3.2 The restrictions include political activity and in particular not undertaking the role of democratically elected Councillor of an Authority or Member of Parliament.
- 3.3 There has always been an ability on application to gain an exemption where for example a staff member were not carrying out a role where they advised members and had no involvement with the press but were on a higher salary.

Prior to 2008 these were made to the Independent Adjudicator who had given increasing advice that Local Authorities should be looking to grant exemptions to the political restriction where possible given the nature of the employment.

- 3.4 Under Section 202 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 responsibility for the grant and supervision of the exemptions from political restriction has been transferred to the Standards Committee of each authority.
- 3.5 Where there is an application received in relation to a politically restricted post then it will be for the Standards Committee at the London Borough of Brent to consider the issue as to whether or not the restriction can be removed.
- 3.6 Every application should be received on its merits, however where the application received relates specifically to a type or class of posts then it would seem appropriate that consideration should be given in respect of all the posts in that class within the authority.

4.0 Issues

- 4.1 The application is made in relation to a Political Assistant post of which there is currently one within the Authority in the Labour Group office . If exemption was granted another one would be created in the Liberal Democrat office. Currently the Conservative Group are serviced by a Group Office Manager and should the incumbent leave the position would be reconsidered as Political Assistant post.
- 4.2 The current postholder for the Liberal Democratic post is due to leave the Authority in April 2012 and has been on secondment elsewhere in the Authority. There is also a temporary staff member in the role on behalf of the Labour Group and so both posts will need to be recruited to. In order to optimise the opportunities for recruitment to what will now become Political Assistant posts an application has been made for these posts to no longer be politically restricted.
- 4.3 Whilst it is noted that in the original description of politically restricted posts it specifically includes Political Assistants, the way in which Local Authorities are managed regarding recruitment and the role of Political Assistants have changed whereas those members of staff advising Councillors in relation to strategic and operational decisions the council should make need to retain the objectivity around political parties. Those who are providing the support for Councillors in their roles need to be released from the restrictions around political activity.
- 4.4 In undertaking the recruitment to the role of Political Assistant if the role is enabled to support the Councillors in their activity, including some political activity, this will assist in the provision of the support given to them.
- 4.5 The indication given by the Independent Adjudicator previously on this issue was that where possible flexibility should be given when considering the exemptions sought, particularly where no advice was being given to Members at committee in decision making or where speaking to the press was not undertaken on behalf of the Authority.

4.6 The Committee are required to consider the application in respect of the role of Political Assistant and whether it should provide the exemption requested.

4.7 It should be noted that the Standards Committee as it is currently formed will, following the Localism Act 2011, be changed or disbanded and will no longer have the responsibility for this function. In these circumstances setting out a procedure to follow for this particular issue does not seem time efficient. Members of the Committee are therefore asked to give full consideration to the application made in respect of the role and note the contents of the job description attached as **Appendix 1**. For assistance attached as **Appendix 2** is guidance produced in respect of politically restricted posts.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications to this report. The cost of the posts will remain the same irrespective of the posts being politically restricted.

6. Staffing implications

6.1 Currently there are no staffing implications.

7.0 Diversity implications

7.1 There are no direct diversity implications and all posts would need to follow current recruitment procedures.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 These are held in the body of the report

Background Papers


None

Should any person require any further information about the issues addressed in this report, please contact Kathy Robinson on 0208 937 1368

Fiona Ledden
Director of Legal and Procurement

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JOB DESCRIPTION

	POST TITLE: Political Assistant	
	RESPONSIBLE TO: Democratic Services Manager	
	RESPONSIBLE FOR: Support to Group Office	
	SERVICE AREA: Central	LOCATION: Brent Town Hall
	UNIT: Legal & Democratic Services	TEAM:

PURPOSE OF JOB

To provide assistance and guidance to the Leader of the relevant political group and to other members of the authority within the group

To provide support through the Group Office and the staff working within the office

[This appointment is time limited to 10th May 2014 or such date before the first annual meeting of the next administration.]

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

The postholder must at all times carry out her/his duties with due regard to the Council's Customer Care, Equal Opportunities and Best Value Policies and incorporating the Council's Core Competencies.

1. To proactively assist and develop ways of supporting the Leader and managing staff and resources effectively.
2. To liaise with senior officers of the Council and maintain lines of communication with key political and other figures both within and outside the Council.
3. To gather information from a wide range of sources including other authorities, the relevant political party, government departments, outside bodies and other agencies.
4. To identify the key/relevant issues on which the Leader of the Group needs to be made aware of and brief the Leader accordingly.
5. To carry out complex research to support the relevant members or officers on key issues affecting the Council and the work of the Group Leader and/or Deputy Group Leader and/or other Group members of the authority
6. To advise Group members on the Council's policies and procedures and standing orders and to provide advice to those members on registering and declaring personal and prejudicial interests and on the Code of Practice on political publicity and on other similar matters.
7. To arrange attendance at events such as conferences and receptions and to arrange hospitality
8. Provide assistance on preparing presentations and formal "messages" from the Group Leader and other councillors in so far as they relate to Council functions

9. To ensure that correspondence into the office and all casework is dealt with in an efficient and timely manner.
10. To prepare for, attend and support such meetings of the Council as may be required from time to time including preparing motions, questions etc..
11. To liaise with the Communications Unit as appropriate to maintain contact with the media and to monitor press coverage and advise on the most effective response.
12. To provide a library or resource service for councillors within the Group.
13. To assist members of the Group in arranging their surgeries and ward meetings.
14. To assist with staff and Member training and development, including induction of new members.
15. To liaise with other Group offices over appointments to committees and outside bodies and arrange for appropriate members to attend committee and other meetings.
16. To carry out any other tasks that might reasonably fall within the remit of the post.

**It is recognised that the roles of the staff will alter if the relevant group is in control of the Council and that some of the tasks will be carried out more or less frequently if the Administration changes or if the number of councillors within the group changes. The JDs will need to be reviewed from time to time to ensure they are still relevant and appropriate.*

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

Notes to Candidates

All criteria in the person specification will be tested either at the application stage and/or as part of an assessment and /or at interview. In order to be shortlisted you must meet all of the criteria listed under the heading ‘short listing’, unless those criteria are expressed as a 'preference' only (although you should address the 'preferred' criteria as well if you can). You should set out in your application form examples to demonstrate how you meet the criteria. Short listed candidates will be invited to attend an assessment and an interview.

	Short listing	Interview	Assessment
Experience			
1. Two years experience of working in an advisory capacity, preferably in a public sector organisation or for a political group, pressure group or similar	✓		
2. Experience of researching complex issues and preparing briefings	✓		
3. Experience of using various IT packages to carry out research and to present information and data	✓		
Knowledge			
4. An understanding of the workings of local government and its relationship to central government and partner agencies	✓	✓	
Skills and Ability			
5. Ability to write and communicate well with people from a variety of backgrounds and at all levels	✓	✓	
6. Ability to utilise ICT skills to assist with research and produce clearly presented documents, presentations etc	✓	✓	
7. Ability to work in a political and sometimes sensitive environment requiring tact, confidentiality and sound judgement	✓	✓	
8. Ability to provide oral and written briefings to the Leader of the Group and other Group members on Council policy and procedure	✓	✓	
9. Ability to work on own initiative and as part of a team, in liaison with officers of all levels across the Council	✓	✓	
10. An understanding of, and a commitment to, the Council’s Equal Opportunities policy	✓	✓	
11. Ability to manage a range of administrative tasks to ensure deadlines are met	✓	✓	
Special Requirements			
12. An understanding of Labour policies and ambitions	✓	✓	
13. Able to attend evening meetings at the Town Hall or at other locations, sometimes at short notice	✓	✓	

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Guidance on politically restricted posts

This guidance note sets out the restrictions on the political activity of senior local government staff and the procedure for employees to apply for their post to be exempt from the classification as a politically restricted post.

List of Politically Restricted Posts

Section 2(2) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (“the Act”) imposes on every local authority a duty to prepare and maintain a list of posts in the staff structure which fall within the following categories as long as they have not been held to be exempt from being placed on the list:

- For a full time post, where the annual rate or remuneration for that post is or exceeds spinal column point 44 on the NJC salary scale (currently £36,730). The NJC salary scale is reviewed annually.
- For part time posts, where the annual rate of remuneration for that post would be or would exceed that amount if they were full time posts in respect of which remuneration were paid at the same rate as for the part time post; and
- Posts which do not fall within the above categories but which appear to the authority to fall within section 2(3) of the Act, i.e. they consist of or involve one or both of the following:
 - Giving advice on a regular basis to the authority themselves, to any committee or sub-committee of the authority or to any joint committee on which the authority is represented;
 - Speaking on behalf of the authority on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters.

Restrictions on Public Political Activity

Government Regulations set out the specific restrictions that apply to holders of politically restricted posts.

Politically restricted post holders may not:

1. Announce or allow anyone else to announce their candidature for election as a member of the House of Commons, European Parliament, or a local authority.
2. Continue in the employment of the authority once notice of resignation has been given to stand as a candidate for the House of Commons.
3. Act as an election agent or sub-agent for a candidate for election to one of the bodies in 1 above.
4. Be an officer of a political party or any branch of such a party or a member of any committee or sub-committee of such a party or branch if such duties require: participation in the general management of the party or branch; acting on behalf of the party or branch in dealings with people other than members of the party.

5. Canvass on behalf of a political party or on behalf of a candidate for election to any of bodies in 1 above.
6. Speak to the public at large or to a section of the public with the apparent intention of affecting public support for a political party.
7. Publish any written or artistic work of which the postholder is the author or co-author or any written work or collection of artistic works in which the postholder has acted in an editorial capacity or permit anyone else to publish such a work or collection if that work appears intended to affect public support for a political party. Specifically excluded from this restriction is the display by a politically restricted post holder of a poster or other document on property occupied as a home or on a vehicle or article used by the post holder.

Terms and Conditions of Employment

Section 1(5) of the Act states that “the terms of appointment or conditions of employment of every person holding a politically restricted post under a local authority (including persons appointed to such posts before the coming into force of this section) shall be deemed to incorporate such requirements for restricting his political activities as may be prescribed for the purposes of this subsection by regulations made by the Secretary of State”.

Procedure to be followed by the Standards Committee

- The Standards Committee or a Sub-Committee of the Standards Committee will hear applications for exemption and matters relating to inclusion directions, made up of at least three members.

Exemptions

- A meeting of the Standards Committee or Sub-Committee will be arranged on receipt of the application for exemption, and Certificate of Opinion if applicable, by the Secretariat.
- The applicant will be entitled to attend the meeting of the Standards Committee or Sub-Committee to make representations, and may be accompanied by an accredited trade union representative or work colleagues employed by the GLA. The GLA may also make representations.
- The applicant and the GLA should provide all relevant documentation for the meeting to the Secretariat at least 8 days in advance of the meeting.
- The decision of the Standards Committee or Sub-Committee is final and is not subject to appeal within the GLA.

Requests for a direction from the Committee that a post should be politically restricted and included in the list maintained by the Authority of politically restricted posts.

- A meeting shall be arranged of a Standards Committee or Sub-Committee, and the postholder or prospective affected shall be entitled to attend the meeting to make representations, and may be accompanied by an accredited trade union representative or work colleague employed by the GLA. The GLA and any party making the applications for the direction may also make representations.

- The postholder, the GLA and any party making the application for a direction should provide all relevant documentation for the meeting to the Secretariat at least [8] days in advance of the meeting.
- The decision of the Standards Committee Sub-Committee is final and is not subject to appeal within the GLA.

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