

	Audit and Standards Advisory Committee 8 September 2020
	Report from: Director of Legal, HR, Audit & Investigations
Standards Report (including quarterly update, 01.4.20 - 30.06.20, on Gifts & Hospitality and mandatory training)	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Not applicable
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	One: 1) Appendix A – Member Training Attendance record
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	(1) Debra Norman, Director of Legal, HR, Audit & Investigations (ext. 1578) (2) Bianca Robinson, Senior Constitutional & Governance Lawyer (ext. 1544)

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee on gifts and hospitality registered by Members, and the attendance record for Members in relation to mandatory training sessions.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Committee note the contents of the report.

3.0 Detail

Gifts & Hospitality

- 3.1 Members are required to register gifts and hospitality received in an official capacity worth an estimated value of at least £50. This includes a series of gifts and hospitality from the same person that add up to an estimated value of at least £50 in a municipal year.
- 3.2 Gifts and hospitality received by Members are published on the Council's website and open to inspection at the Brent Civic Centre.
- 3.3 On the 26.05.20, this Committee considered gifts and hospitality registered by Members from December 2019 to end of March 2020. As the Committee knows following the COVID -19 pandemic, the country went into lockdown in the latter part of March 2020. Consequently, during 01.4.20 - 30.06.20, no gifts and hospitality have been registered by Members.

Member Training Attendance

- 3.4 As requested by this Committee, attendance records for Members in relation to mandatory training sessions has now become a standard reporting item.
- 3.5 The Committee is reminded that:
- a) it is a requirement of the Members' Code of Conduct that all members' "*must attend mandatory training sessions on this Code or Members' standards in general, and in accordance with the Planning Code of Practice and Licensing Code of Practice*".
 - b) The schedule for all mandatory sessions is ordinarily published and approved in the Council calendar at the May Annual Council meeting. There was no Annual Meeting in May 2020 in view of the Regulations which removed this requirement for this municipal year because of the COVID crisis. For 20/21, the Chief Executive agreed the annual calendar of meetings in consultation with the Political Groups. The annual calendar was then confirmed at the council meeting on 13.07.20. All internal training sessions attended by Members are published on the Council's Website and on individual Member profile pages.
 - c) Training session reminders are sent via email, calendar invitations, text messages and, on some occasions, direct telephone calls to Members. The same reminder process is employed for re-run(s) of sessions, where applicable, to take account of personal circumstances like work commitments and child care arrangements etc.
 - d) Currently, there are four mandatory training sessions provided for all Members and five mandatory sessions provided for Committee Members and, where appropriate, co-opted members. These are set out in Table 1 below.
 - e) Mandatory sessions are provided annually and all committee members and substitutes are required to attend the relevant session. In addition, all other Members are invited to attend the sessions.

3.6 Table 1

Mandatory Training	Attendee requirement
1) Standards and the Code of Practice	All Members
2) Corporate Parenting & Safeguarding Children	All Members
3) Safeguarding vulnerable adults	All Members
4) Equalities Training	All Members
5) Planning	Committee Members only
6) Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing	Committee Members only
7) Scrutiny Induction	Committee Members only
8) Audit & Standards Committee and the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee induction training	Committee Members only
9) Brent Pensions Fund – Approach to responsible investment	Committee Members only

3.7 **By way of an overview:**

All committee members for Planning, Standards, Alcohol and Licensing have attended the mandatory training sessions. The following relates to the number of members who have not attended training sessions (as at the 27.07.20).

The Committee should note that the mandatory Committee Member sessions were cancelled for May 2020 when the annual meeting was cancelled. These will now be provided in September/October following the new committee membership, which is to be agreed at the annual meeting on 14.09.20.

Mandatory all member sessions:

- 4 Members need to attend the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Training.
- 1 Member needs to attend the Corporate Parenting & Safeguarding.

Committee Member mandatory sessions:

- 10 Members need to attend the Scrutiny Induction training.
- 5 Members / substitute members need to attend the Brent Pensions Fund – Approach to responsible investment training.
- 2 members need to attend Audit and Standards Committee and the Audit and Standards Advisory Committee Induction Training.

3.8 As the Committee will be aware, in the case of Planning and Licensing Committee membership and the Adoption and Permanency and the Fostering Panels, no special responsibility allowance that would otherwise be applicable can be received under the Members' Allowances Scheme if the relevant mandatory training has not been attended.

- 3.9 As part of the rolling programme of member development, the Council is arranging training on unconscious bias for all councillors. This session will cover anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and is being scheduled for autumn 2020 as part of the Council's Member Learning and Development training series. It is being considered whether this training, along with data protection training, should be added to the suite of mandatory member training requirements and it is proposed that this be discussed at the Constitutional Working Group.
- 3.10 A summary setting out the sessions of mandatory training and Member's names is attached as Appendix A.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council, individual Members and co-opted Members are required to promote and maintain high standards of conduct in accordance with s27 of the Localism Act 2011. The attendance at mandatory training sessions is a means to achieve this and a requirement pursuant to the Brent Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Part 5, of the council's Constitution.

6.0 Equality Implications

- 6.1 There are no equality implications arising out of this report.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

- 8.1 Not applicable.

Report sign off:

Director of Legal, HR, Audit & Investigations