



Audit and Standards Advisory Committee

10 July 2019

Report from the Director of Legal, HR, Audit and Investigations

Quarterly Update on Standards (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:	Two 1) Appendix A – Gifts & Hospitality register 2) Appendix B – 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) Biancia 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 (1) gifts and hospitality registered by Members and (2) 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.

2.2 That the Committee considers what further steps could be undertaken to improve the attendance record for Members in relation to mandatory training sessions.

3.0 Detail

Gifts and 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 Brent Civic Centre. A list of gifts and hospitality registered by Members from 22 February to 25 June 2019 is attached at Appendix A.
- 3.3 Hospitality accepted by the Mayor in her/his civic role is recorded separately and published on the Council's website.

Member Training Attendance

- 3.4 In accordance with this Committee's terms of reference, it is required "*to consider and to make recommendations to the Monitoring Officer, Audit and Standards Committee or Full Council as appropriate in relation to:*
 - *the Council's obligation to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted members;*
 - *the operation an effectiveness of, and compliance with, the Brent Members' Code of Conduct (the Code);*
 - *advice and assistance to members and co-opted members on how to observe the Code".*
- 3.5 Furthermore, it is a requirement of the Code 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".*
- 3.6 Since May 2018, all internal training sessions attended by Members are published on the Council's Website and on individual Member profile pages.
- 3.7 There are four mandatory training sessions provided for all Members – identified in Table 1 below. Five mandatory sessions are provided for Committee Members and, where appropriate, co-opted members. These 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.

The schedule for all mandatory sessions is published and approved in the Council calendar at the May Annual General meeting.

Table 1

Mandatory Training	Attendee requirement	Number of Training Sessions organised from May 2018-October 2019
1) Standards and the Code of Practice	All Members	5
2) Corporate Parenting & Safeguarding Children	All Members	3
3) Safeguarding vulnerable adults	All Members	2
4) Equalities Training	All Members	2
5) Planning	Committee Members only	2
6) Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing	Committee Members only	2
7) Scrutiny induction	Committee Members only	2
8) Audit & Standards Committee and the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee induction training	Committee Members only	2
9) Brent Pensions Fund – Approach to responsible investment	Committee Members only	2

3.8 By way of an overview:

Mandatory all member sessions:

- 18 Members need to attend the Safeguarding vulnerable adults training – no repeat session is currently planned.
- 16 Members need to attend the Corporate Parenting & Safeguarding – a repeat session is planned for 9 October 2019
Children training
- 12 Members need to attend the Equalities Training – a repeat session is planned for October / November 2019.
- 3 Members need to attend the Standards and the Code of Conduct training (a repeat session is planned for July 2019).

Committee Member mandatory sessions:

- 8 Members / substitute members need to attend the Audit & Standards Committee and the Audit & Standards Advisory Committee induction training.
- 9 Members need to attend the Scrutiny induction training.
- 7 Members / substitute members need to attend the Brent Pensions Fund – Approach to responsible investment training.
- 3 Members / substitute members need to attend the Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing training.
- 2 substitute Members need to attend the Planning training.

- 3.9 For all training sessions reminders are sent via email, calendar invitations, text messages and, on some occasions, direct telephone calls to Members. Re-run(s) of sessions have been scheduled from September 2018 for Members who could not attend the originally listed training session and sessions are scheduled to take account of personal circumstances like work commitments, child care arrangements etc. Detailed attendance records for mandatory training sessions are maintained and published as stated above. A summary setting out the sessions of mandatory training members still need to attend since May 2018 is attached as Appendix B. This Committee is invited to consider what further steps could be undertaken to improve the attendance records of some Members.
- 3.10 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.

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.

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