



**Public Meeting of
Joint Standards Committee**

- To:** Councillors Runciman (Chair), Barton, Horton and Taylor
(City of York Councillors)
Cllrs Martin (Vice-Chair) and Simpson (Parish
Councillors)
Mr Hall (Independent Person) and Mr Laverick
(Independent Person)
- Date:** Monday, 9 February 2015
- Time:** 2.30 pm
- Venue:** The Thornton Room - Ground Floor, West Offices (G039)

AGENDA

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point, Members are asked to declare:

- Any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- Any prejudicial interests or
- Any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. Minutes (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Standards Committee held on 10 September 2014.

3. Minutes of Sub-Committees (Pages 5 - 12)

To approve and sign the minutes of the Assessment Sub-Committee meetings of:

- 10 September 2014
- 21 November 2014
- 18 December 2014

4. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting, members of the public who have registered their wish to speak, regarding an item on the agenda or an issue within the remit of the Joint Standards Committee, may do so. The deadline for registering is **5:00 pm on Friday 6 February 2015**.

To register to speak please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting on the details at the foot of the agenda.

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http://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/download/3130/protocol_for_webcasting_filming_and_recording_of_council_meetings

5. Joint Committee Membership (Pages 13 - 14)

This report seeks Members' views on future membership of the Standards Committee.

6. Local and Neighbourhood Planning - (Pages 15 - 24) Standards Issues

This report starts to identify potential ethical standards issues which may arise during the process of agreeing local and neighbourhood plans. It is intended to prompt debate on the issue with a view to considering whether further guidance should be offered to Councillors involved in these processes and to determine whether the Committee should do more to promote high ethical standards in relation to this matter.

- 7. Dispensations** (Pages 25 - 28)
This report seeks Members' approval to a change in the City Council's arrangements for granting dispensations.
- 8. Local Government Association (LGA) Report** (Pages 29 - 42)
This report advises Members of the contents of a report prepared by the Local Government Association following a recent peer review.
- 9. Monitoring Report in respect of complaints received**
The Monitoring Officer will give a verbal update in respect of complaints received.
- 10. Review of Work Plan** (Pages 43 - 44)
Members are asked to review the Committee's work plan and suggest items for consideration at future meetings.
- 11. Urgent Business**
Any other business which the Chair decides is urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer:
Name: Jayne Carr
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For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

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我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim (Polish)
własnym języku.

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی میا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Joint Standards Committee
Date	10 September 2014
Present	Councillor Runciman (Chair) (CYC Member) Councillor Martin (Vice-Chair) (Parish Council Member) Councillor Horton (CYC Member) Councillor Simpson (Parish Council Member) Councillor Taylor (CYC Member)
In attendance	Mr Laverick (Independent Person)
Apologies	Councillor Barton, Councillor Crawford and Mr Hall (Independent Person)

1. Appointment of Chair

Resolved: That Councillor Runciman be appointed as Chair of the Joint Standards Committee.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Resolved: That Councillor Martin be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Joint Standards Committee.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

4. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Standards Committee held on 29 April 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

5. Public Participation

It was reported that there were no registrations to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

6. Review of Complaints for the last Municipal Year

Consideration was given to a report which provided an overview of the standards complaints received during the previous municipal year and which reminded Members of some of the processes they had agreed for handling complaints.

Members noted that one case remained ongoing. The Monitoring Officer explained the reasons for this.

Resolved: (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That, once the outstanding case referred to in the report had been concluded, the Monitoring Officer be asked to review the reasons why the investigation had been prolonged to see whether any lessons can be learnt for the future.

Reason: To ensure the Committee continues to make an effective contribution to ethical standards within the City Council.

7. Monitoring Report in Respect of Complaints Received

The Monitoring Officer gave a verbal report in respect of complaints that had been received.

Members were informed that three complaints had been received since the last meeting. One was being investigated, one had been withdrawn by the complainant and the third was a new complaint which was still being assessed.

Resolved: That the update on complaints received be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee is kept updated on complaints received.

8. Revised Hearing Procedure

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval to new procedures for hearings in respect of Standards cases.

Members noted the more inquisitorial nature of the procedures and agreed that the revised procedures were less complex than previously and brought greater clarity to the process.

Members made the following comments regarding the procedures:

- The wording "*or with the permission of the Panel*" should be deleted from paragraph 6 of the Hearing Procedure. Whilst Members agreed that the procedure should attempt to give reassurance that representation was unlikely to be necessary, it was important that the procedures did not deter either party from being represented should they so wish.
- Whilst Members recognised that there may be practical reasons for limiting the number of witnesses, for example to prevent repetitious submissions or to avoid focussing on issues which were not in dispute, the expectation would be that a commonsense approach would prevail. It was important to ensure that parties felt that they had had a fair hearing.
- Greater clarity in the wording of paragraph 3 of the Pre-Hearing Procedures to make clear that it would be for the Committee to determine whether any part of the hearing should be held in private and whether any documentation should be withheld from the public.

It was agreed that the suggestions would be incorporated into the procedures and emailed to members of the committee¹.

- Resolved:
- (i) That, subject to the agreed amendments, the pre hearing and hearing procedures set out in the annexes to the report be approved.
 - (ii) That the procedures be reviewed after the next Hearing Committee meeting.

- Reasons:
- (i) To ensure that the Committee has published processes which allow for the fair and efficient handling of hearings.

- (ii) To ascertain whether any further amendments are required to the procedures.

Action Required

1. Update procedures for circulation

AD

9. Review of Work Plan

Members were asked to review the Committee's work plan and suggest items for consideration at future meetings.

The following suggestions were put forward:

- Inclusion of an item on Guidance in respect of Neighbourhood Plans
- Deletion of the proposed items on "Review of the Code of Conduct" and "Guidance on Hospitality", as the Committee had given consideration to these matters in the course of their work.

Resolved: That, subject the agreed amendments, the Committee's work plan be approved.

Reason: To ensure that the committee has a planned programme of work in place.

Councillor Runciman, Chair

[The meeting started at 3.00 pm and finished at 3.30 pm].

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Joint Standards Committee - Assessments Sub-Committee
Date	10 September 2014
Present	Councillors Runciman (Chair), Simpson and Taylor

1. **Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda. No interests were declared but Councillor Simpson advised the Committee that he had sought confirmation that he was free to attend the meeting as the complainant attended parish council meetings.

2. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

Resolved: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 3 (Complaint against a Member of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee) on the grounds that it contained information relating to an individual. This information is classed as exempt under Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

3. **Complaint against Member of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee**

Members considered a complaint made against a Member of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee and were asked to decide whether, and how, the matter should be pursued.

The substance of the complaint was that a Member had called another Member a liar and had made other personal comments about them.

The report of the Monitoring Officer and the views of the Independent Person were noted.

Members agreed that sufficient prima facie factual evidence had been provided to enable them to make a decision. Although the evidence appeared to demonstrate a breach of the Code the matter did not require referral for investigation.

Having considered the evidence provided in support of the complaint, it was

Resolved: That the Monitoring Officer be instructed to liaise with the Group Whip of the subject of the complaint to secure an apology for the complainant¹.

Reason: The Sub-Committee considers that the facts of the case indicate a prima facie breach of the Code, as the content of the email had been inappropriate.

Action Required

1. Contact Group Whip

AD

Councillor Runciman, Chair

[The meeting started at 3.30 pm and finished at 4.00 pm].

Meeting	Joint Standards Committee - Assessments Sub-Committee
Date	21 November 2014
Present	Councillors Runciman, Taylor and Simpson
In attendance	Mr Laverick – Independent Person

4. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

5. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 3 (Complaints against Members of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee) on the grounds that it contained information relating to an individual. This information is classed as exempt under Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

6. Complaints against Members of a Council Covered by the Joint Standards Committee

Members considered complaints made against Members of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee and were asked to decide whether, and how, the matters should be pursued.

In each case the report of the Monitoring Officer and the views of the Independent Persons were noted.

Complaint 1

The substance of the complaint was that two Members of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee objected to remarks made about them on twitter by another Member and did not accept the apology offered by the Member concerned.

Having considered the evidence provided in support of the complaint, it was

Resolved: That the Group Whip be requested to speak to the subject of the complaint regarding expected standards of behaviour.

Reason: The Member concerned had also breached the Code of Conduct on previous occasions but the issue did not merit further action by the Joint Standards Committee.

Complaint 2

The substance of the complaint was that a Member of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee objected to the conduct of another Member at a meeting.

Having considered the evidence provided in support of the complaint, including viewing a webcast of the part of the meeting to which the complaint related, it was

Resolved: That the complaint not be upheld.

Reason: The Sub-Committee considers that no breach of the Code of Conduct had taken place.

Complaint 3

The substance of the complaint was that a member of the public had alleged that two Members of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee had breached the Council's Code of Conduct.

Mr Laverick, Independent Person, offered to withdraw from the meeting for this item having drawn Members' attention to the information provided in his written comments, including his indirect connection to an organisation referred to in the

complaint. Members agreed that the personal interest declared by the Independent Person was such that it should not preclude him from putting forward his views on the matter under consideration.

The Monitoring Officer did not take part in the discussion on this item.

Having considered the evidence provided in support of the complaint, it was

Resolved: That the complaint be referred for investigation.

Reason: The Sub-Committee considers that the matter required further investigation to ascertain whether or not there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Councillor Runciman, Chair

[The meeting started at 11.30 am and finished at 12.15 pm].

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Meeting	Joint Standards Committee - Assessments Sub-Committee
Date	18 December 2014
Present	Councillors Runciman, Taylor and Martin
In attendance	Mr Hall – Independent Person Mr Laverick – Independent Person

7. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

8. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item 3 (Complaint against a Member of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee) on the grounds that it contained information relating to an individual. This information is classed as exempt under Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

9. Complaint against a Member of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee

Members considered a complaint made against a Member of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee and were asked to decide whether, and how, the matter should be pursued.

The report of the Monitoring Officer and the views of the Independent Persons were noted.

The allegation related to comments made at a meeting by a Member of a Council covered by the Joint Standards Committee.

Having considered the evidence provided in support of the complaint, it was

Resolved: That further consideration of the complaint be deferred to enable the complaint to be referred to the Group Whips of the parties concerned in the expectation that they would resolve the issue in an appropriate manner and report back to the committee on the action taken.

Reason: The Committee agreed that, in the first instance, this was the most appropriate means of addressing the issues raised through the complaint.

Councillor Runciman, Chair

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.30 am].



Joint Standards Committee**9th February 2015****Report of the Monitoring Officer****Joint Committee Membership****1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks Members' views on future membership of the Standards Committee.

2. Background

- 2.1 The former statutory Standards Committee was required to have both City and Parish Council representation. The Localism Act 2011 abolished this requirement. Members considered that it was appropriate for Parish Councillors to be represented on the new Standards Committee and for them to have full voting rights.
- 2.2 In order to achieve this, the City Council agreed to ask the Local Councils Association to secure the nomination of three Parish Councillors to sit on the new Committee. The Committee was then technically established as a Joint Committee between the City Council and the three Parish Councils. The Parish Councillors on the Committee have, however, always seen themselves as representatives of Parish Councils generally rather than their home Parish.
- 2.3 Councillor Don Crawford who has served on this Committee and its predecessor for many years has recently retired. In May Parish Council elections will take place affecting both Councillors Martin and Simpson. It is therefore appropriate to consider future arrangements for the Committee at this stage subject, of course, to any decisions which a newly constituted City Council might take after its own elections.

Recommendations

3. Members are recommended to:
- 1) Reaffirm the commitment to full Parish Council representation on the Committee
 - 2) To ask the Monitoring Officer to seek nominations from the Local Councils Association for the new Municipal Year
 - 3) If nominations are received prior to the next meeting of the Committee to invite the nominees to attend that meeting

Reason: To ensure that the deliberations of the Joint Standards Committee reflect the circumstances of Parish as well as City Councillors

Contact Details

Author:
Andrew Docherty
Monitoring Officer
CBSS
Tel No. 01904 551004

Report
Approved



Date 28/01/2015

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

N/A

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None



Joint Standards Committee**9th February 2015****Report of the Monitoring Officer****Local and Neighbourhood Planning – Standards Issues****1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report starts to identify potential ethical standards issues which may arise during the process of agreeing local and neighbourhood plans. It is intended to prompt debate on the issue with a view to considering whether further guidance should be offered to Councillors involved in these processes and to determine whether the Committee should do more to promote high ethical standards in relation to this matter.

2. Background

- 2.1 Substantial guidance is available both locally and nationally for Members involved in determining planning applications as to ethical considerations they need to consider. That is not the case for Members involved in preparing local and neighbourhood plans. The changes to the ethical framework brought about by the Localism Act make this a more complex subject as does the introduction of neighbourhood planning arrangements.
- 2.2 The City Council as the local planning authority is responsible for preparing a local plan which sets out planning policies for the area. Such plans set out how the area will develop over time, allocating land for development and setting out policies on what will and will not be permitted and where. These plans go through a process of agreement within the Council before being independently examined by an inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.
- 2.3 Neighbourhood plans can be taken forward by Town and Parish Councils or “Neighbourhood Forums” which are community groups designated to pursue neighbourhood planning in areas

without a Town or Parish Council. They sit within the strategic context of the local plan and establish general planning policies for a neighbourhood. Neighbourhood planning can also be used to produce neighbourhood development orders which permit development without the need for a planning application. Neighbourhood plans and development orders can only be implemented with majority support expressed through a local referendum.

3. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- 3.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced requirements for all Councillors to register their disclosable pecuniary interests and those of their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living as if they were spouse or civil partners. These interests are defined in regulations and include beneficial interests in land, licenses to occupy land and tenancies between the Council and certain bodies in which the Councillor has an interest – such as companies of which he or she is a Director.
- 3.2 While the requirement to register a disclosable pecuniary interest is quite straightforward Councillors are aware that the requirements in the Act to declare interests at meetings and to withdraw from those meetings are less so.
- 3.3 The Act says, in summary, that where a Councillor is present at a meeting of the Council or a committee and the Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be or being considered at the meeting then the Councillor must not participate in the discussion or the vote.
- 3.4 The prevailing wisdom supported by the guide produced by the Department of Communities and Local Government is that phrase “has a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter....” should be interpreted as “has a disclosable pecuniary interest **relating to** any matter to be or being considered etc.....”.
- 3.5 The question then is when will an interest in land relate to the local or neighbourhood plan? Unlike with the previous statutory regime the disclosable pecuniary interests provisions do not contain any specific provision excluding interests which apply generally to all or a majority of residents of an area. Nor does the Localism Act allow for any judgment of the significance of an

interest allowing a Councillor with an insignificant interest to declare it and then participate.

4. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and the local plan

4.1 The local plan will cover the entire City and will amongst other things contain design considerations against which any future planning application will be judged. It could be argued that everyone who owns land in the City and who might want to make a planning application or might be affected by their neighbour's application therefore has a disclosable pecuniary interest relating to the plan. This is clearly not what the law was intended to cover although Parliamentary and Ministerial intent does not always translate into the law.

4.2 Some assistance may be obtained from the guide produced by the Department of Communities and Local Government in relation to setting the Council tax which says:

“If you are a homeowner or tenant in the area of your council you will have registered, in accordance with the national rules, that beneficial interest in land. However, this disclosable pecuniary interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest in the matter of setting the council tax or precept since decisions on the council tax or precept do not materially affect your interest in the land. For example, it does not materially affect the value of your home, your prospects of selling that home, or how you might use or enjoy that land.”

4.3 The Act (in contrast to the former Code) does not actually include any provisions relating to the materiality of interests. However, Councillors ought to be able to rely on this clear Ministerial statement and it is difficult to conceive of the Director of Public Prosecutions authorising action against a Councillor who relies on it. While the statement relates specifically to council tax the only basis for it being made is that, in the Minister's view, an interest must be material to prevent a Member participating. That principle must be taken to apply equally to other decisions affecting the entire Council area.

4.4 In general, the plan will not materially affect a Councillor's interests and it seems unlikely that he or she will be taken to have a disclosable pecuniary interest in it. This is the advice

which the Monitoring Officer has already given to City Council Members. It is suggested though that there will be exceptions.

- 4.5 The most obvious exception is where a Councillor owns land which is earmarked for development in the plan. In such a situation it is suggested that the Councillor must regard him or herself as having a disclosable pecuniary interest.
- 4.6 Another exception may be where the Councillor owns land which is not currently earmarked but which might reasonably come forward. This again, it is suggested, ought to be treated as a disclosable pecuniary interest.
- 4.7 Members should also be aware of the need to consider land owned not by them but by another body in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. The first prosecution brought under the Localism Act which is due to come to trial later this year relates to a Councillor's interest as a Director of the commercial arm of a Housing Association and includes an allegation that he failed to declare an interest in a meeting where the core strategy was under debate.
- 4.8 A more difficult scenario is where the land earmarked for development neighbours land owned by the Councillor. There are those who argue that development on a neighbour's land might *affect* a Councillor's property but does not *relate* to it and so is not a disclosable pecuniary interest. It is unhelpful that this issue is open for debate. It is suggested though that if a change in planning status of a neighbour's land affects the value of a Councillor's land then the Councillor should not normally participate in the decision without a dispensation.

5. Disclosable pecuniary interests and neighbourhood planning

- 5.1 At a neighbourhood level, while the principles are the same, the issues are perhaps more polarised. Most Parish Councillors live in their Parish. They are smaller geographical areas and development proposals are therefore more likely to materially impact on individual Councillors. The "neighbouring land" scenario is also more likely to arise.
- 5.2 An additional difficulty for Parish Councillors is that Parish Councils have fewer Members than the City Council. In a larger Council relatively few decisions are taken by all Members

collectively and it can be more straightforward to ensure that those Members who may find they have an ethical standards difficulty are less engaged in the detailed development of the plan. That may not be possible in a Parish Council.

6. Interests under the Codes of Conduct

- 6.1 The code of conduct adopted by the City Council and the model code upon which the Town and Parish Councils is based contain similar though not identically worded provisions which plug some gaps left by the Localism Act.
- 6.2 The City Council's code includes a provision that where business relates to or is likely to affect the Councillor then the Councillor has an interest which must be declared and, if considered to be prejudicial, requires the Member to withdraw from the meeting.
- 6.3 The scenario described in paragraph 4.8 of a neighbour's land being earmarked for development would certainly fall to be considered under this provision if not covered by the Localism Act.
- 6.4 This provision also covers more than just financial interests. Matters which affect a Councillor's well being also fall to be considered under this provision.
- 6.5 No similar provision appears in the Parish and Town Council code but, like the City's code, the Parish code does have a general prohibition on seeking to improperly confer an advantage on an individual. That provision could easily come into play in this context.
- 6.6 The Localism Act does not deal with the situation where a friend, relative or close associate may benefit from the way land is allocated in a plan. Both the City and Parish Councils codes address this gap.

7. Dispensations

- 7.1 Both the Act and the codes make provision to grant dispensations to allow Members to participate notwithstanding that they have an interest. In the case of the City Council the power to grant dispensations rests with the Standards Committee in some cases and with the Monitoring Officer in

others. Parish and Town Councils make their own arrangements. The grounds for giving a dispensation are set out in the Localism Act and include a catch all that: “it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation”.

7.2 The extent of any dispensation is a matter for the body granting it. It would, for example, be possible to grant a dispensation allowing a Member to speak and vote on the adoption of a plan as a whole but not to participate in any specific discussion relating to his or her land.

7.3 Clearly it makes sense for Councils to have considered how dispensations will be granted before they need to do so. One option would be for the Standards Committee to offer to consider dispensations applications on behalf of Parish Councils. This could be achieved by a joint arrangement between the Parish and City Councils under which the Parish Council delegated decision making responsibilities to the City Council.

8. Bias and Predetermination

8.1 As Members know the case law on this issue took several twists and turns before reaching a conclusion that predisposition was acceptable but predetermination was not. The Localism Act 2011 then enacted a provision which applies if there is an issue about the validity of a decision, and it is relevant to that issue whether a Member had, or appeared to have, a closed mind (to any extent) when making the decision. In such a case:

“A decision-maker is not to be taken to have had, or to have appeared to have had, a closed mind when making the decision just because—

(a) the decision-maker had previously done anything that directly or indirectly indicated what view the decision-maker took, or would or might take, in relation to a matter, and

(b) the matter was relevant to the decision.”

8.2 Recent case law has resulted in conclusions that not every Member may be comfortable with. In a case last year relating to Lichfield B.C’s local plan the Chair of the Planning Committee sent an e-mail stating:

“Hello all, this is to remind group members who attended the last group meeting and inform those who did not, that the group decided in government parlance to have a three line whip in place at the council meeting on Tuesday. In plain terms group members either vote in favour of the report I will be giving regarding the local plan or abstain. Also if you are approached by anyone promoting alternative sites, please make no comment. If group members are reported making negative comments it would without any doubt derail our local plan. Sorry if you find this a little heavy handed but there is an awful lot at stake. Have a kind weekend. Kind regards, Ian.”

8.3 The Court rejected the claim of predetermination saying:

“[The statutory wording] refers to a decision-maker having previously done “anything” in relation to a matter that was relevant to the decision. That would, in my judgment, cover the sending of the e-mail. It was something done prior to the meeting which was relevant to the decision in that it was exhorting the recipients to vote in a particular manner. It comes within the description of doing “anything” which is the statutory wording. In my judgment the indication of the view expressed in the e-mail would not be something that would amount to predetermination.

In any event, despite Mr Crean's submissions, I do not find that the tenor of the e-mail was so strident as to remove the discretion on the part of the recipient as to how he or she would vote. Neither the language used nor the absence of any sanction support that contention. The debate shows a far reaching discussion between members and displays no evidence of closed minds in relation to the decisions that had to be taken. A fair minded and reasonable observer in possession of all of the facts would not be able to conclude on the basis of the evidence that there was any real possibility of predetermination as a result of the e-mail”

8.4 It does, however, remain the case that a Member who has a completely closed mind should not participate in decision making.

9. Issues for Discussion

9.1 This report has been presented with a view to prompting discussion about standards issues in the context of local and neighbourhood planning. Many members of the Committee have experience of these processes which they will be able to bring to the debate but to help discussion the following issues are raised:

- The report focuses on the declaration of interests . Are there other ethical issues which might arise in the local and neighbourhood planning process?
- Would the Committee endorse the advice contained in paragraphs 4.5 to 4.8 as supporting the principles of:
 - (a) selflessness;
 - (b) integrity;
 - (c) objectivity;
 - (d) accountability;
 - (e) openness;
 - (f) honesty;
 - (g) leadership
- How can the Committee ensure that Councils promote those principles in developing their local and neighborhood plans?
- Does the Committee believe that it may be able to offer assistance to Parish Councils in dealing with dispensations and in what circumstances?
- A neighbourhood plan could be produced by a neighbourhood forum whose members would not be bound by statutory requirements to declare interests or by a locally agreed code of conduct. How would the Committee promote high standards of ethical conduct in the preparation of a plan by such a body?

Recommendations

10. Members are recommended to consider the issues set out in the report and any further issues arising from debate and determine whether the Committee should take further steps

Reason: To support Members involved in local and neighbourhood planning in achieving high standards of conduct.

Contact Details

Author:
Andrew Docherty
Monitoring Officer
CBSS
Tel No. 01904 551004

Report **Date** 28/01/2015
Approved

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all* **All**

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None

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Joint Standards Committee

9 February 2015

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Dispensations

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks Members' approval to a change in the City Council's arrangements for granting dispensations.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Localism Act 2011 allows for dispensations to be granted where a Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest which might otherwise prevent him or her participating in an item of business. The grounds upon which a dispensations may be granted are set out in the Act as follows:
- a) without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited 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) 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) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area,
 - (d) without the dispensation each member of the authority's executive would be prohibited by section 31(4) from participating in any particular business to be transacted by the authority's executive, or
 - (e) that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

- 2.2 The Joint Standards Committee considered this issue in November 2012 and delegated responsibility for granting dispensations on grounds (a), (b) and (d) to the Monitoring Officer. This was on the basis that it is largely a matter of fact as to whether these circumstances exist whereas grounds (c) and (e) require value judgments.
- 2.3 To date and aside from the Council tax dispensation, with which Members are familiar, all dispensations have been granted on ground (b).
- 2.4 The change in the make up of the Council now makes it more likely that dispensations will need to be considered. It also brings into focus the position of the independent members. As, by definition, they do not belong to a political group they cannot avail themselves of ground (b). Arguably ground (a) could cover the position although it is not so much transacting business which would be impeded but the likely outcome of the business. Ground (e) though clearly provides the power to grant such dispensations where appropriate.
- 2.5 An Independent Member in this position could apply to the Joint Standards Committee for a dispensation. Identifying the likelihood of the issue arising in sufficient time to arrange a meeting may though be problematic. The Monitoring Officer's delegated powers could be extended to clearly cover this issue. That may be appropriate if Members consider that the position of an independent Member with a DPI equates to that of a member of a political group. The third option would be to delegate the power to grant dispensation under ground (e) but in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.
- 2.6 On balance the third option is considered the most appropriate. As well as dealing with the scenario identified in the report this proposed delegation provides a route for granting dispensations in other situations where a meeting of the Committee cannot readily be arranged.

Recommendations

3. Members are recommended to:
- 1) Grant delegated powers to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to grant

dispensations on the grounds that: "*that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation*"

Reason: To ensure that high standards are maintained while allowing effective decision making

Contact Details

Author:

Andrew Docherty

Monitoring Officer

CBSS

Tel No. 01904 551004

**Report
Approved**

Date

04/11/14

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None

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Joint Standards Committee**9th February 2015****Report of the Monitoring Officer****Local Government Association Report****1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report advises Members of the contents of a report prepared by the Local Government Association following a recent peer review.

2. Background

- 2.1 On the 9th October the City Council passed the following motion:

“Council notes with concern the results of the Organisational Development Action Plan, in particular the Leadership section and the current position re ‘Concern about the Behaviour of some Members’. This follows last year’s Peer Challenge review which also expressed concern regarding members’ understanding of council priorities and the lack of clarity within the council. Council requests that an independent body be appointed to report back to the Audit and Governance Committee no later than its meeting of 10 December 2014 and that the report is delivered directly to this committee, investigating these concerns and whether Members have acted in a manner which falls below that which staff and residents expect. This report should take into account the personalised politics being exhibited within York by elected members and their supporters – most notably on social media.”

- 2.2 A team of peers representing the Local Government Association’s political groups was assembled and their work was overseen by the Association’s regional lead officer. The annexed report was produced and considered by the Audit and Governance Committee at their meeting on 15th January 2015.

Officers were tasked with preparing an action plan to present to the next meeting of that Committee on 11th February.

2.3 Some of the issues raised in the Review clearly fall within the remit of this Committee and, in light of the timings of the meetings, it seems appropriate for this Committee to consider the report in advance of the action plan being considered by Audit and Governance Committee.

2.4 There is one specific recommendation for the Standards Committee which is recommendation o:

“For the Standards Committee to consider how to supplement the work of Group Leaders, whips and officers in enforcing behaviour, and also how to work with members outside the influence of whips, such as Independent members. More generally for the Joint Standards Committee to review its way of working.”

2.5 That recommendation is particularly linked to recommendations m and n that:

“Those in leadership positions, particularly Group Leader and whips (where they exist) need to recognise their particular responsibility, to model good behaviour, to play their role in reaffirming and reinforcing good behaviour and in challenging poor behaviour, particularly by their own members. Members in leading positions need to step up to this role.” and

“Senior officers being enabled and encouraged to pro-actively support members in enforcing the new standards and to step up to this role.”

2.6 The Committee is asked to consider how it would wish to respond to this recommendation.

2.7 The Review team also recommended that a cross party group should be established to review and develop a set of charters, codes and protocols listed in recommendations d to k. Those recommendations included a recommendation to:

“Review the Member Code of Conduct and Member/Officer Protocol; including access to officers”

- 2.8 The Committee may wish to express a view as to whether and how it ought to influence and support such a Review. Any comments made could be reported to both Group Leaders and to Audit and Governance Committee.

Recommendations

3. Members are recommended to:
- 1) Consider how best to respond to the recommendation set out in paragraph 2.4
 - 2) Make comment in relation to the proposal that the Code of Conduct and Member Officer protocol should be reviewed by a cross party group and how the Committee might support such a Review.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee makes a positive contribution to the development of high ethical standards in the Council.

Contact Details

Author:
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Monitoring Officer
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Report
Approved

Date 30/01/2015

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes: LGA Review document

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To: Councillor Ayre

cc. Councillor Williams
Councillor Steward
Councillor Aspden
Councillor D'Agorne
Councillor King
Kersten England

17th December 2014

Dear Councillor Ayre

Council Motion 9 October 2014

Thank you for asking the LGA to carry out this work. Please find below our report, which is consistent with the emerging findings I presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on 10th December.

The four peers and I would like to acknowledge the open and helpful co-operation of the members and officers that we spoke to. This made our work much easier and the process wholly transparent.

The LGA Review

1. On 9 October the City Council passed the following motion:

“Council notes with concern the results of the Organisational Development Action Plan, in particular the Leadership section and the current position re ‘Concern about the Behaviour of some Members’. This follows last year’s Peer Challenge review which also expressed concern regarding members’ understanding of council priorities and the lack of clarity within the council. Council requests that an independent body be appointed to report back to the Audit and Governance Committee no later than its meeting of 10 December 2014 and that the report is delivered directly to this committee, investigating these concerns and whether Members have acted in a manner which falls below that which staff and residents expect. This report should take into account the personalised politics being exhibited within York by elected members and their supporters – most notably on social media.”

HOW WE DID OUR WORK

2. We assembled a team of experienced peers, overseen by the LGA's regional lead officer Mark Edgell. One peer from each of the 4 LGA political groupings¹ was matched to the appropriate Groups in York, giving the possibility of all members being involved. The 4 peers were:

- Councillor Tudor Evans (Labour), Leader of Plymouth City Council
- Councillor Glen Sanderson (Conservative), LGA Regional Lead Peer and Deputy Leader of Opposition at Northumberland County Council
- Councillor David Faulkner (Liberal Democrat), Newcastle City Council
- Councillor Apu Bagchi (Independent), LGA Regional Lead Peer and Bedford Borough Council.

3. Collectively and individually we met with Group Leaders and others and collected evidence to understand the issues that York Council was encountering, their impacts and other important issues of context around the original motion. The most frequent contact from the peers was via the Group Leaders, but in total peers spoke with more than half the membership of CYC. Mark Edgell also met senior officers at the Council. We did not directly speak to outside "supporters" but heard a range of views from within the Council about their contribution.

4. The fact that the Council had passed the motion demonstrated that there was a widely held view that there were some member behaviour issues that needed addressing. Our fieldwork was intended to understand the issues, triangulate the views and evidence we received and to look beyond the symptoms to assess the underlying causes.

5. We carried out the work faithfully and constructively. Our findings are being reported to you honestly, both in this report and verbally at the Audit and Governance Committee on 10/12/14. It is important to stress that this was not an inspection. This was a focussed and tailored review to meet the terms of the motion. The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them.

WHAT WE FOUND

6. As your corporate peer challenge said in 2013, "York is an exciting place to be and there is clear ambition amongst councillors and officers to do the best for both the people of York and the Council." It is a place with a strong sense of history and identity and passionate members and residents. The Council

¹ (the LGA Independent Group cover all members not part of Labour, Conservative or Liberal Democrat Groups)

has changed political composition at each of the last 3 elections. This has created a challenge for continuity and governance as it brings different priorities and ways of working into play.

7. CYC moved to the Strong Leader² and Cabinet model at the same time as the Council moved from a long period of minority control to three and a half years of majority control. We all agreed that the change from no overall control to a single party administration under the Strong Leader model can often be a difficult transition for opposition parties. Additionally when coupled to challenging financial pressures and a new administration wanting to make its mark, it can severely test relationships and can lead to distraction. In York it has contributed to the perception that the Council has become “more partisan.”

8. There is clearly a real commitment to York and a considerable desire to serve it well, but that passion sometimes overflows into some of your people behaving inappropriately at times.

9. We are clear that the daily local paper, social and other commentators³ outside the Council have an important and legitimate role to play in scrutinising the Council and the use of taxpayers’ money. In some cases, however, the frequency, nature and intensity of comment in, especially, social media has the effect of raising the temperature and adding to a focus on personalities and process rather than just policies (although this is increasingly common in some other localities too).

10. Politicians and officers tell us that they aspire for York to be an effective, open and accessible Council. Indeed there are examples of good practice in this area – such as webcasting meetings. But delivering on this aspiration is impaired by suspicion and an absence of trust between the political parties, with some officers and with some commentators. These issues can affect the morale and confidence of staff and the attitude and commitment of partners. All other things being equal, this will impact on reputation and how well CYC serves its community.

11. The following observations are brigaded under the adjusted headings of an Improvement and Development Agency toolkit looking at attributes and determinants of ethical governance.

Priorities and communication

- We found less focus on Council priorities and strategy to meet York’s significant budget challenge than we expected. This was across all Groups. What we observed and what we were told was the focus has

² As in the definition under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

³ The Council motion uses the phrase “supporters”, you could also use the term “active citizens,” we use the term “commentators”

been on personalities and ways of working. Members need to be much more engaged on policy.

- The quality and flow of information to non-Cabinet members is felt to be limited or perhaps patchy and inconsistent. This has raised questions from opposition members about whether this situation reflects the will of the Labour Group or the will of officers. Our view was the situation actually arises because people are overworked or unclear about how they should operate and, occasionally, things going wrong.
- The Council has proactively changed the way some decisions are publicly announced, to allow the controlling Group to gain political advantage. This is not unusual and perfectly acceptable. However it would be appropriate for all members to be able to access announcements when they are released to the media
- Access to salmon papers also seems inconsistent. Generally we feel there may be a culture of over-caution.
- There was an example (we only heard of a single example) of a Cabinet member being copied in to emails sent to opposition members, contrary to the Council's member/officer protocol. This is wrong and we saw a clear understanding from officers that this should not happen.
- There are questions over the level and quality of advice from officers to non-Cabinet members. We feel that at least some of this concern is the product of unrealistic expectations about the role of non-Cabinet members in a Strong Leader model. However we are also clear that non-executive councillors deserve proper and appropriate support.
- Many of the issues above have been compounded by the lack of clarity provided by the Council on what "the rules" are, for example on access to information. While we feel the various codes are generally clear, there are questions about awareness of these codes, how they are being applied and how they are being enforced.
- Social media is being extensively used by some members and some outside commentators. This increases openness and accessibility, but has also been a significant platform for "misuse." Indeed the attention paid to social media, from members and, indeed, some officers at the Council is greater than is healthy or constructive. Some people seem to be very sensitive to comment. We suggest it would be a good time for the Council to pause and reflect if the current attention to, and use of, social media is helpful. We are not saying that Twitter etc. should not be used – it is a valuable communication tool – but the current approach is damaging.
- There is an extensive industry in commentators from outside the Council making FoI requests. CYC aspires to be a progressively open and transparent council but the general culture of distrust, compounded

by the closeness of some members, from across the Council, to some outside commentators seems to breed suspicion and theories of conspiracy. This is not to deny the legitimate role of FoI and outside scrutiny, but the current level and nature of FoI requests are a costly and largely unproductive distraction. However this is a situation faced by many public sector bodies.

Accountability

- There appears to be only limited clarity provided over the role of and expectations of members. As a result we heard about issues that had previously been raised through the corporate peer challenge in 2013 of “a perception from some non-executive members, opposition members and communities that they are neither properly informed nor able to influence decision making.” Without clarity over roles and of the decision making process, members’, and others’ expectations about role and support may not be appropriate.
- Linked to this we heard about a lack of support on casework/surgery management and the frustration this can breed.
- Overview and scrutiny is a place where opposition and other non-executive members and indeed communities and outside commentators can play an effective role. But questions were raised with us over whether the support for Overview and Scrutiny is at the right level. We would like to observe that the recent move towards a greater sharing of chairing of overview and scrutiny is to be welcomed.
- All the above issues have, and are, leading to tensions as individual members and groups of members become frustrated over what they see as limited support for the roles they feel accountable for and not attaining what they consider to be the appropriate involvement in policy debate.

Relationships

- There are oases of good relationships. But some relationships between some members are poor. Some stray into being personalised and vindictive. Relationships between members and officers are generally good, but there are patches of them being poor. Relationships between members and the community are generally good, but the perception of behavioural issues at the Council overall risks damaging these.
- It is also worth noting again here that there appear to be close relationships between some councillors, from across the Council, and some outside commentators, some of whom might be considered to be

vexatious complainants. These are seriously damaging culture and relationships within the Council.

- There have been times when some Opposition members have confused officers doing their job (serving a Leader and Cabinet) with an erroneous perception of them being politically biased. This has led to unfortunately adversarial behaviour from some members towards other members and indeed towards officers.
- The accessibility of staff in open plan offices has some significant advantages. But in the current atmosphere also has potential disadvantages. Some members have been accessing inappropriately junior officers to raise and progress issues – either surgery/casework or sensitive strategic issues. In some cases these officers have been mistreated. Some have used the word “bullying.” This is obviously inappropriate and has been compounded by a lack of clarity – in this case on expectations over access to officers. With such clarity, senior officers should be enforcing rules to ensure the open plan does not become an “open house.” We were also told by members that they have heard of staff-to-staff bullying (we understood these matters were being dealt with appropriately by officers).

Leadership, behaviour and styles

- There is a reasonable degree of trust and mutual respect between most senior members and senior officers. This mirrors the findings of the corporate peer challenge in 2013 which said that “the leadership provided by the Leader and Chief Executive is strong and visible and widely commended both internally and externally.”
- There are questions about whether all senior members or officers display and role-model effective and appropriate leadership at all times. For example, has the senior leadership been a catalyst for positive change such as in tackling the member-related issues raised by the previous LGA corporate peer challenge?
- It was suggested to us that some poor behaviour has been particularly targeted against women. It is not apparent that members understand the impact of their behaviour on officers. Members need to consider their role as employers, their duty of care and the well-being of staff. There is suggested to be some trolling of officers. Officer behaviour has in some cases adapted and adjusted negatively, in the face of member behaviour.
- There has been some member reinforcement of good behaviour and challenging of poor behaviour, but this has been patchy. It needs to be happening more consistently. It would appear that some inappropriate behaviour is now being taken for granted, which generates a difficult

working environment and potentially a new (and worse) base from which future poor behaviour will build.

Debate, team working, co-operation and challenge

- We heard of a Task and Finish approach to some issues. For example there has been a member group looking at staff sickness. This is a positive example of cross party working and good practice.
- The ambitious, determined approach from the largest Group, and the way in York, that the Cabinet Portfolio Holders and senior officers work closely together to develop and implement policy is normal throughout local government, but seems to be being misinterpreted. Indeed a lot of what goes on in York in terms of process is "normal". It should not be assumed that it is a conspiracy, or that officers have been politicised if there is close working between the Cabinet and senior officers.
- Debate seems to be often focused on personalities and processes/ways of working rather than policies.
- Officers are sometimes being placed, either wittingly or unwittingly, in the cross-fire of party politics.

Management of standards

- It is clear the Member Code of Conduct is not being adhered to. Some behaviour is seen as hostile and offensive.
- It is entirely possible to be effective politically without needing to attack a person or his or her personality. Many members are not leading by example through role-modelling good behaviour. Alongside this lack of self-discipline, there is only limited active discipline within Groups through, for example, Group Leaders and whips – where they exist. But there is extensive provocation, especially by social media.
- Officers are also not consistently calling out or clamping down on behaviours when they could do (although understandably they may sometimes be nervous of doing so).
- "The standards process" has actually had relatively few complaints about members referred to it – compared to the problems we have heard about. But there is some doubt about whether the process is working as it should. There is also a question of the extent to which the Joint Standards Committee has been proactive (or not) in addressing behavioural issues. We are unclear whether or not it was being chaired independently on member standards issues.

- As already mentioned, alongside the formal standards process for members, CYC are receiving many FoI requests and other complaints, many of which seem to have “standards” or “ethical governance” as the basis for them. Some of these are probably vexatious. A small number of people are submitting large numbers and they will be costly to the Council diverting other resources away from key tasks. The close link between some of these commentators and some individual councillors, from across the Council, should be a concern.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

12. The issues we have heard about clearly go across CYC councillors. It is not just in one Group or section of the membership. The fact that Council passed this motion on 9 October should be evidence enough that there is an issue. Indeed the motion demonstrates recognition of the problem, so it is important to capitalise on that. The change of Leader presents an opportunity for the Council to look forward, particularly as the previous Leader could be a polarising figure. This is absolutely not the same as saying any or all fault lies with the previous Leader.

13. We heard from Group Leaders that there is a big appetite for change, and a strong desire to see that change. However for this change to happen there is a need for many people to behave differently in the future. Members have a duty to behave in the best way possible to represent their City. There is an urgent need for this change. A new Leader presents a real opportunity to make it happen.

14. To conclude our review we have a range of linked recommendations. As a way forward we would recommend a three-pronged approach:

- RESET, behaviours from today
- REAFFIRM, and clarify rules, roles and expectations
- REINFORCE the rules and behaviours

15. Our recommendations under these 3 headings are:

Reset

- a. As hard as it will be for some individuals, we urge people to draw a line under the past, look forward and reset behaviours. There must be a willingness from **all** to commit to better ways of working and without any harking back to past issues.
- b. For some of your people a better sense of realism, a less sensitive approach and not such an intense interest in social media will pay dividends. This will allow people to just get on with what is already an incredibly and increasingly challenging job, especially in the current financial climate.

- c. The forthcoming all-out election could act as a further reason to delay putting these behavioural issues right. But we urge the Council to act urgently to reset behaviours and find new ways of working⁴ that will stick for the next 6 months and beyond.

Re-affirm

- d. Clarify the roles of members (and different roles of different members) and officers in the decision making process. This will include visible schemes of delegation. This will help individual members and groups of members to have fair and realistic expectations of their roles.
- e. Clarify rights to receive and access information. Ensure these are then consistently and routinely applied.
- f. Develop your media protocol. This would be partly how and when decisions are communicated inside and outside. But part will be a pause and reflection on the appropriate use of social media. This is not a “whether to use” Twitter etc. question, but rather “how to use” Twitter etc. You may want to consider including the nature of use of social media within the Member Code of Conduct.
- g. Clarify the Council’s values and what they mean for members.
- h. Review the Member Code of Conduct and Member/Officer Protocol; including access to officers.
- i. Agree the appropriate support necessary for the role of members in their wards and neighbourhoods. Consider more-regular briefing for non-Cabinet members. Consider the re-introduction of a nominal budget for ward councillors. Consider the appropriate support for Overview and Scrutiny. Consider a more-effective mechanism for dealing with councillors’ casework/surgeries. Agree routes for councillors to escalate concerns.
- j. Take a look at the number of Fol requests and analyse why you are receiving them. Consider whether the Council is meeting its aspirations to be open and whether it can change the atmosphere around such issues and so reduce outside commentators’ desire or need to submit so many Fol requests.
- k. We would suggest that on recommendations d to k, the Council sets up a cross-party Group to review and develop these protocols, codes, charters and to provide that clarity. This could be done alongside a consideration of the opposition Groups’ paper on governance changes.

⁴ By “ways of working” we mean behaviours. We are not referring to any need for political pacts to stick for 6 months to handle the no overall control

On recommendation j you may wish to include a small number of outside commentators in those discussions.

Re-inforce

- l. Reinforce the new clarity over roles, decisions making process, information, media use, and values through member training, with an expectation that **all** members would attend. This training would be an opportunity for members to remove any ambiguity and to think through how to tackle difficult scenarios. There would be value in undertaking some of this training/development jointly with officers.
 - m. Those in leadership positions, particularly Group Leader and whips (where they exist) need to recognise their particular responsibility, to model good behaviour, to play their role in reaffirming and reinforcing good behaviour and in challenging poor behaviour, particularly by their own members. Members in leading positions need to step up to this role.
 - n. Senior officers being enabled and encouraged to pro-actively support members in enforcing the new standards and to step up to this role.
 - o. For the Standards Committee to consider how to supplement the work of Group Leaders, whips and officers in enforcing behaviour, and also how to work with members outside the influence of whips, such as Independent members. More generally for the Joint Standards Committee to review its way of working.
 - p. Instigate more-regular meetings between Group Leaders where, amongst other issues, progress on some "non-political" issues for the City could be made in a collegiate way.
 - q. Enable and encourage CYC members to visit other Councils to not only pick up ideas for policy and performance in York, but also to see what is normal in terms of governance and behaviour.
 - r. To systematically log recommendations from the 2013 Corporate Peer Challenge, to bring them together into one document alongside (within) the Organisational Development Plan (or other overall improvement plan) and to add the recommendations from this review. Then to ensure they are acted on appropriately and that progress and impact is monitored by a nominated committee.
16. If CYC wishes, the LGA would be happy to come back and help facilitate some of these conversations and provide other support to the Council to help it move forward from now.

Mark Edgell
Local Government Association

Work Plan for Joint Standards Committee 2014-2015

<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Items</u>	<u>Notes</u>
18 June 2014 at 3.00pm [Meeting cancelled]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Chair for municipal year • Appointment of Vice-Chair for municipal year • Monitoring report in respect of complaints received • Review of the arrangements for handling complaints. 	Standard item As agreed at meeting of 28 November 2012 (minute 19)
10 September 2014 at 3.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Chair for municipal year • Appointment of Vice-Chair for municipal year • Annual Report on Complaints • Monitoring report in respect of complaints received • Revised Hearing Procedures 	As agreed at meeting of 29 April 2014 Standard item
12 November 2014 at 3.00pm <i>(this meeting was cancelled and the items deferred to meeting of 9 February)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring report in respect of complaints received • Local and Neighbourhood Planning – Standards Issues • Dispensations 	Standard item As requested at meeting of 10 September 2014
9 February 2015 at 3.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring report in respect of complaints received • Local and Neighbourhood Planning – Standards Issues • Dispensations • LGA Report on Member Behaviour 	Standard item As requested at meeting of 10 September 2014
22 April 2015 at 3.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring report in respect of complaints received 	Standard item

To be included:

- Promoting ethical standards (requested at meeting of 20 February 2013 – minute 25)
- Electoral Probity (requested at meeting of 19 February 2014 – minute 28 refers)

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