

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

4 April 2017

Commenced: 4.00 pm

Terminated: 4.35 pm

Present:

Mrs Valerie Bracken (Chair)

Councillors Bell, M Smith and J Lane, Town Councillor E Shember-Critchley and Mrs J Barnes

Also in attendance:

Steven Pleasant, Tameside Council Chief Executive and Accountable Officer NHS Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group, and Sandra Stewart, Executive Director, Governance, Resources and Pensions (Monitoring Officer)

Apologies for absence:

Councillors Kitchen and S Quinn

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted by members of the Standards Committee.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the proceedings of the Standards Committee held on 8 September 2015 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Reference was made to the Chief Executive's appointment as Accountable Officer for NHS Tameside and Glossop Clinical Commissioning Group and the governance and accountability framework to support the development and implementation of an integrated health and care system in Tameside and Glossop.

The Monitoring Officer advised that NHS England had recently published revised guidance for Clinical Commissioning Groups on managing conflicts of interests effectively. This included guidance which specifically addressed developments in care models, integrated care organisations and operating under joint commissioning arrangements so staff could continue to work innovatively with partners whilst also providing transparency. Supporting materials would be made available to assist with the implementation of the guidance on which Monitoring Officer intended to report further at the next meeting of the Standards Committee.

3. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CAMPAIGNERS: ELECTORAL REGISTRATION, POSTAL VOTING, PROXY VOTING AND POLLING STATIONS

Consideration was given to a report of the Monitoring Officer explaining the Chief Executive as Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer had been assessed by the Electoral Commission as achieving the highest standards in respect of all areas of performance. This compared very favourably with other Returning Officers within the North West region.

The Council wished to maintain its reputation for high standards and it was important, therefore, that whilst the Returning Officer continued to comply with legislation that the integrity of the elections was also maintained in order that the public had confidence in the integrity of elections. With that end in mind, all candidates and agents would be asked to sign up to the Code of Conduct for Campaigners on electoral registration, postal voting, proxy voting and polling stations which had been agreed by the main political parties. A copy of the latest version of the Code was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

In addition, reference was made to guidance, attached to the report at Appendix 2, for the pre-election period of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Mayoral Election 2017 to assist local authorities when considering proposed publicity / events during the forthcoming Election period.

RESOLVED

That the position adopted by the Returning Officer and the advice to be given to all candidates / campaigners that this Committee expects to be complied with to maintain the high standards of Electoral conduct be noted.

4. MAYORAL PROTOCOL

Consideration was given to a report of the Monitoring Officer advising that given the Civic Mayor was the Borough's first Citizen and the public profile of the Civic Party was high, the Council had for a number of years operated a Mayoral Protocol. The Protocol guided the Civic Mayor and other members of the Civic Party and set out the standards of behaviour, conduct and appearance that must be adhered to by the Civic Party.

In accepting the role of Civic Mayor, Mayoress or Consort and Deputy Mayor, those taking up office were agreeing to abide by the Mayoral Protocol and agreeing to carry out their role with dignity and gravitas. Appended to the report for consideration was the declaration that members of the Civic Party would be expected to sign prior to taking up office.

Members of the Standards Committee welcomed the approach contained in the protocol and declaration designed to maintain the high standards already in place in Tameside and to reduce risk.

RESOLVED

That the Protocol setting out the standards of conduct, behaviour and appearance of all members of the Civic Party and the requirement to make the declaration to abide by the Protocol prior to take up office be noted and endorsed.

5. REGISTER OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

The Monitoring Officer advised that the Register of Interests and Register of Gifts and Hospitality were available at the meeting for inspection. She intended to refresh the Council's protocol for Elected Members and employees on gifts and hospitality reminding them of the Council's expectations and the procedure to be followed for consideration at a future meeting of the Standards Committee.

6. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair advised that there were no urgent items for consideration at this meeting.

7. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was noted that future meetings of the Standards Committee would take place on the following dates:

Tuesday 5 September 2017

Tuesday 7 November 2017

Tuesday 3 April 2018

CHAIR