

Audit, Governance and Standards (Standards) Sub-Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Audit, Governance and Standards (Standards) Sub-Committee held on Thursday 9 May 2019 at 6.30 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Gavin Edwards
Councillor Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE
Councillor Humaira Ali
Amrit Mangra

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Peter John
Councillor Sarah King
Councillor Bill Williams

OFFICER SUPPORT: Doreen Forrester-Brown, Director of Law and Democracy
Olwen Dutton, Investigating Officer
Allan Wells, Legal Advisor
Virginia Wynn-Jones, Constitutional Team

1. APOLOGIES

There were none.

2. CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

The members present were confirmed as the voting members.

3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

There were none.

4. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

5. COMPLAINT REFERENCE LF002 - 18

The investigating officer presented her report. Councillor John had questions for the investigating officer. Members had questions for the investigating officer.

Councillor John presented his statement. Members had questions for Councillor John.

The independent member of the sub-committee presented her opinion. Councillor John had questions for the independent member.

RESOLVED:

That the sub-committee agree that they are not satisfied that Councillor John is in breach of the Code of Conduct.

The reasons for this are set out below.

The sub-committee accepts that the tweets were made in Councillor John's capacity as a councillor, and therefore the Code of Conduct is relevant.

Taking into account the report and all the evidence we have heard, we are satisfied that on the balance of probabilities there was not a breach of the Code of Conduct.

We consider the first reason that the third tweet was not in breach of the Code of Conduct was that Councillor John did give due regard for the impact of his comments on the feelings, wishes and rights of the subject of those comments; and as such, did not breach the Code of Conduct.

Councillor John is representing the voice of his constituents, which is the duty of a councillor. While the choice of words could have been better, they did not cross the line of breaching the Code of Conduct.

Members of the committee also believe it was relevant that the tweet was phrased as a question.

Meeting ended at 8.30 pm

CHAIR:

DATED:

[CABINET ONLY]

DEADLINE FOR NOTIFICATION OF CALL-IN UNDER SECTION 17 OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES IS MIDNIGHT, [DATE].

THE ABOVE DECISIONS WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTABLE UNTIL AFTER THAT DATE. SHOULD A DECISION OF THE CABINET BE CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY, THEN THE RELEVANT DECISION WILL BE HELD IN ABEYANCE PENDING THE OUTCOME OF SCRUTINY CONSIDERATION.