

# Agenda

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## Standards Committee

Date: **Monday 2 March 2020**

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Time: **6.00 pm**

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Place: **St Aldate's Room - Oxford Town Hall**

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For any further information please contact:

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# Standards Committee

## Membership

<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Shaista Aziz	
	Councillor Susanna Pressel	
	Councillor Michael Gotch	
	Councillor Pat Kennedy	
	Councillor Ben Lloyd-Shogbesan	
	Councillor Sian Taylor	
	Councillor Christine Simm	
	Dorian Hancock	Parish Council representative / non-voting member
	Chris Ballinger (Independent Person)	Independent Person / non-voting
	Jill McCleery (Independent Person)	Independent Person / non-voting
	Andrew Mills-Hicks (Independent Person)	Independent Person / non-voting
	Osama Raja (Independent Person)	Independent Person / non-voting

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# AGENDA

## Pages

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**3 CODE OF CONDUCT: SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS AND INDIVIDUAL DISPENSATIONS - 30 SEPTEMBER 2019 TO 31 JANUARY 2020**

1 - 6

**Purpose of report:**

To advise the Committee of:

1. the number of complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct which have been, or are to be, considered by the Head of Law and Governance (in her statutory capacity as the authority's Monitoring Officer) and the Independent Persons. The report also notes the outcome, where complaints have been concluded; and
2. the number of dispensations to an individual member, granted under Section 33 of the 2011 Localism Act, by the Monitoring Officer, following consultation with an Independent Person.

**Recommendation:**

That the Standards Committee notes the content of the report and the learning point identified.

**4 MEMBER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2020/24**

7 - 26

**Purpose of report:**

To seek the endorsement of the Standards Committee of the new member training and development scheme for the municipal years 2020-24.

**Recommendation:**

That the Standards Committee resolves to:

1. Endorse the Draft Member Training and Development Scheme (Appendix 1)
2. Note the arrangements for buddying (para. 6f & Appendix 2)
3. Note the arrangements for offering personal safety training and guidance to members and election candidates (paras. 8-9)

**5 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

27 - 30

**Recommendation:**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2019 as a true and accurate record.

## **6 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Committee is scheduled to meet at 6.00pm on the following dates:

- 29 June 2020
- 15 September 2020
- 16 November 2020
- 8 March 2021

## **DECLARING INTERESTS**

### **General duty**

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed “Declarations of Interest” or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

### **What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?**

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your\* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council’s area; licences for land in the Council’s area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor’s Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council’s website.

### **Declaring an interest**

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest.

If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

### **Members’ Code of Conduct and public perception**

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members’ Code of Conduct says that a member “must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself” and that “you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned”. What this means is that the matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the Code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

\*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those of the member’s spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

**To:** Standards Committee  
**Date:** 2 March 2020  
**Report of:** Monitoring Officer  
**Title of Report:** Code of Conduct: summary of complaints and individual dispensations – 30 September 2019 to 31 January 2020

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	<b>To advise the Committee of:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. The number and status of complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct which have been, or are to be, considered by the Head of Law and Governance (in her statutory capacity as the authority's Monitoring Officer) in consultation with the Independent Persons.</b></li><li><b>2. The number of dispensations to an individual member, granted under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011, by the Monitoring Officer, following consultation with an Independent Person.</b></li></ol>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>That the Standards Committee notes the content of the report and the learning point identified.</b>

## **Introduction and background**

- 1. In compliance with legislation relating to the standards and conduct of elected councillors, the Council has in place complaints handling arrangements to enable an individual to make a formal complaint that an elected or co-opted member of the City Council, or of a Parish Council within the City Council's area, has failed to comply with the authority's Members' Code of Conduct.**
- 2. The Standards Committee is responsible for promoting high standards of ethical behaviour by developing, maintaining and monitoring the Members' Code of Conduct. This report from the Monitoring Officer which identifies any issues or learning points arising from the complaints received contributes to that monitoring process.**

3. The key stages of the complaints handling arrangements can be summarised as:

<p><b>Initial tests</b></p>	<p>The Monitoring Officer will apply the following “initial tests” to the complaint:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is a complaint against one or more named councillors of Oxford City Council or a Parish Council within the city boundaries;</li> <li>• The named councillor was in office at the time of the alleged conduct and the Code of Conduct was in force at the time;</li> <li>• The complaint, if proven, would be a breach of the Code under which the councillor was operating at the time of the alleged misconduct.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessment</b></p>	<p>The complaint will be assessed and a decision made by the Council’s Monitoring Officer in consultation with an Independent Person as to the next steps. At this stage the options open to the Monitoring Officer are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No further action</li> <li>• Informal resolution brokered by the Monitoring Officer and/or Group Leader</li> <li>• Referred for investigation</li> <li>• Referred to the police or other regulatory agency</li> </ul>
<p><b>Investigation</b></p>	<p>A formal investigation may be conducted by an officer from Oxford City Council, an officer from another local authority or an independent investigator.</p> <p>The investigating officer will review the complaint and supporting evidence and may interview some or all of the people concerned.</p> <p>The investigating officer will then produce a draft report. The complainant and the subject councillor concerned will normally have an opportunity to comment on the draft report. The investigating officer will then submit the report to the Monitoring Officer.</p>
<p><b>Local Hearing</b></p>	<p>The Monitoring Officer will consider the findings of the investigation and, in consultation with the Independent Person(s), determine what action to take. At this stage the options open to the Monitoring Officer are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Hearing – complaint to be determined by the Standards Committee;</li> <li>• Local Resolution - a fair resolution of the complaint which is acceptable to all parties brokered by the Monitoring Officer; or</li> <li>• No action - complaint dismissed</li> </ul>

## Complaints made against members of Oxford City Council or a Parish Council

4. The Monitoring Officer received no complaints against members of the City Council or a Parish Council in the period 30 September 2019 to 31 January 2020.

## Dispensations granted to an individual Member

5. The Localism Act 2011 prevents Members from participating in any business of the Council where they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) unless they have sought a dispensation under Section 33 of the Act. Applications must be made in writing and dispensations may be sought for a period of up to four years.
6. On 1 October 2018 Council granted a general dispensation, to remain in force for a period of 4 years (ending on 30 September 2022), to all Oxford City Council Members and co-opted Members, to speak and vote where they would otherwise have a DPI in the following matters:

- **Determining an allowance** (including special responsibility allowances), travelling expense, payment or indemnity given to Members
- **Housing:** where the Member (or spouse or partner) holds a tenancy or lease with the Council as long as the matter does not relate to the particular tenancy or lease of the Member (their spouse or partner);
- **Housing Benefit/Universal Credit:** where the Councillor (or spouse or partner) receives housing benefit;
- Any **Ceremonial Honours** given to Members;
- Setting the **Council Tax** or a precept under the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 (or any subsequent legislation); and
- Setting a **Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme** or Local scheme for the payment of business rates (including eligibility for rebates and reductions) for the purposes of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 (or any subsequent legislation)

7. In October 2018 Council also delegated the granting of dispensations to an individual member under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 to the Monitoring Officer, following consultation with an Independent Person.
8. In the period covered by this report there has been one request for an individual dispensation under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.
9. This was a request from the Lord Mayor in respect of the Council meeting held on 27 January 2020.
10. The background to this request for a dispensation is recorded in the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 January 2020:

The Monitoring Officer gave the following advice about whether members of Council who are landlords or tenants in the private rented sector could

participate in the debate and vote on Motion 2: Licensing Private Rented Sector Homes:

Members' property interests will be included in their Register of Interests, which is a matter of public record (with the exception of any sensitive interests).

The Members' Code of Conduct states that where any matter disclosed in a councillor's Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, "the councillor must declare that he or she has an interest...If the councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting he or she must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed". (Constitution 22.5(d))

The matter to be considered is whether the Council should in principle continue to seek government agreement to bring forward plans for a city-wide licensing scheme covering the whole private rented sector. This motion is not considering any individual properties and therefore I take the view that it is premature for members to be required to declare an interest and leave the meeting.

If and when members are asked to consider and decide upon the details of a specific scheme, this would bring into play members' property interests in the private rented sector and each affected property owned by a member would at that stage be a disclosable pecuniary interest.

The Lord Mayor noted the advice provided but said that, as he was a landlord in the city and in the interests of transparency, he had requested and received a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer to allow him to chair the debate but abstain from the vote.

11. This request for a dispensation raises a number of interesting "learning" points. The Lord Mayor first raised his concerns and sought a dispensation during the briefing meeting held immediately before the Full Council meeting. Given those time constraints the Monitoring Officer was unable to consult with one of the Council's Independent Persons before deciding whether or not to grant the dispensation. In summary the Monitoring Officer advised that she did not need to grant a dispensation as there was no interest to declare.
12. However, the Lord Mayor chose not to accept the Monitoring Officer's advice and repeated his request for a dispensation on the basis that he would be presiding at the meeting.
13. It should be noted that other members, known to be landlords in the city, chose to accept the advice given by the Monitoring Officer to the Council meeting.
14. Following the Council meeting the Monitoring Officer consulted with an Independent Person who confirmed the agreement with the steps the Monitoring Officer had taken.



## Legal implications

15. The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to have a Code of Conduct which sets out the standards expected of Members whenever they act in their official capacity. The Code must also have in place a suitable procedure at a local level to investigate and determine allegations against elected Members and co-opted Members and arrangements to deal with requests for dispensations. The Council is also responsible for having arrangements in place to investigate and determine allegations against Parish Councillors.

## Financial implications

16. There is a cost to the authority when a complaint is referred for external investigation this is determined by market factors in terms of the availability of investigators identified through complaint procurement processes.

## Risk management

17. If the Council fails to adopt and maintain a Code of Conduct and process for the investigation of complaints which is fit for purpose, robust and transparent then there are risks to the Council's reputation and also to the integrity of its corporate governance and decision-making processes as it will not be compliant with legislation. Formal consideration of requests for dispensation minimises the risk of the Council not following lawful procedures in respect of members' interests.

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**To:** Standards Committee  
**Date:** 2 March 2020  
**Report of:** Head of Law and Governance  
**Title of Report:** Member training and development

<b>Summary and recommendations</b>	
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To seek the endorsement of the Standards Committee of the new member training and development scheme for the municipal years 2020-24.
<b>Recommendations: That the Standards Committee resolves to:</b>	
1.	Endorse the Draft Member Training and Development Scheme (Appendix 1)
2.	Note the arrangements for buddying (para. 6f & Appendix 2)
3.	Note the arrangements for offering personal safety training and guidance to members and election candidates (paras. 8-9)

<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1	Member training and development scheme 2020
Appendix 2	Buddying checklist
Appendix 3	Personal safety guidelines - updated Jan 2020
Appendix 4	Extract from the Minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 21 October 2019

## **Introduction and background**

1. The provision of a comprehensive member training programme is a fundamental element of good governance. It ensures that all members are properly equipped to undertake their duties as councillors and protects the integrity of Council decision making by minimising the risk of successful challenge.
2. The Standards Committee has responsibility for advising the Monitoring Officer on training for members and is asked to endorse the proposed Member Training and Development Scheme for 2020-24 which is detailed in this report.

## **Training and development scheme 2020-24**

3. The proposed training and development scheme (Appendix 1) has been informed by input from the Standards Committee, the cross-party Constitution Review Group and officers across all of the relevant Council service areas.
4. The Standards Committee, when considering the principles for a revised training and development scheme (see Appendix 4), expressed a range of views but generally accepted that newer members should receive finance, safeguarding and values and behaviours training. The Committee also proposed that the frequency of compulsory Code of Conduct training should be reduced. The Committee suggested that recognition should also be given to those councillors who bring transferrable skills and experience from their professional life or other roles. The proposed scheme incorporates these principles.
5. Officers have generally been keen to see the scope of compulsory training expanded to cover more topics, including overviews of key services.
6. The proposed training and development scheme largely builds and expands upon the Council's previous scheme. The key changes are that the proposed scheme:
  - a. Aims to equip members for the period of their term of office.
  - b. Reduces the frequency of compulsory Code of Conduct training from annual to biennial.
  - c. Includes training on finance, safeguarding and values and behaviours within the induction programme (compulsory for new members).
  - d. Formalises the wider training offer including training on personal safety, unconscious bias and audit skills. Previously training on such topics has been offered on an ad hoc basis or not at all.
  - e. Grants discretion to the Head of Law and Governance to agree that a member does not need to attend compulsory training where special circumstances apply.
  - f. Formalises the arrangements for buddying whereby Committee and Member Services act as "buddies" for newly elected members with reference to a buddying checklist (Appendix 2) and members of the senior management structure act as buddies for any new Cabinet Members.

### **Personal safety**

7. Personal safety is unfortunately a significant issue for members at present. The Council has offered conflict awareness training to elected members in March ahead of the May 2020 local elections for which they will be canvassing. This will be delivered to groups of up to 15 members over half a day (minimum 3 hours) at a cost of c. £500 per session. The proposed training scheme (Appendix 1) includes an offer of further personal safety training post-elections in 2020 and then subsequently each March prior to City Council elections.
8. This offer will also be made to all candidates standing in the May elections (c. 200 individuals) and 2 April 2020 has been identified as a provisional date for that training session. This will be advertised imminently to election agents.

9. The Council has also refreshed and reissued its guidance for members on personal safety and lone working principles, which was previously issued in 2016. This guidance (Appendix 3) was circulated to members in parallel with the offer of training due to take place on 25 March 2020.

### **Values and behaviours**

10. The Council has previously offered training on unconscious bias to all members and specifically to members of the Appointments Committee. The Standards Committee has previously indicated that it wishes members to receiving training on equality and diversity issues.
11. It is proposed that training on equality and diversity will be included in a wider training course on values and behaviours which will encompass aspects such as the Public Sector Equality Duty as well as unconscious bias. That training will be delivered at least in part by an external trainer and the aim will be to equip members with a broad understanding of what an inclusive council looks like and how individually members contribute to that.

### **Legal issues**

10. There is no legal requirement for the Council to adopt a scheme for member training but doing so is considered good corporate governance and member support practice.

### **Financial issues**

11. The majority of member training is delivered by officers of the Council in the Town Hall. Services are responsible for service-based training (e.g. planning, licensing), and may use external trainers where service budgets allows.
12. There is a small budget for member training held by Committee and Member Services which has been used to pay for one or two external trainers per year as required to meet members' training and development needs in particular areas that the Council cannot deliver (e.g. chairing skills training, unconscious bias). This budget is also used to fund individual members' attendance at external training courses that are relevant to their special responsibilities or the reasonable learning and development of a councillor.
13. Any move away from the provision of in-house training or an increase in the number of specialist external training courses would result in an additional financial cost to the Council which has not been budgeted for.

### **Risk**

14. There is a risk that if members undertaking regulatory functions are not equipped to undertake those roles then the Council's decision making could be undermined and subject to an increased risk of challenge, which, if successful, could be very costly for the Council. Similarly if members are not trained on the Code of Conduct there is a risk of an increase in the number of complaints against members.

## Equalities

15. All newly elected councillors are invited to declare any special requirements relating to the provision of training and Committee and Member Services will work with the individual to ensure that those needs are met.

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## **Member training and development scheme 2020-24**

### **Purpose**

1. To ensure that all elected members are equipped with the basic skills, knowledge and resources they need to perform their duties and responsibilities as a councillor during their term of office.

### **Principles**

2. Member training and development will be based on the following principles:
  - i. An induction for new members and essential training for all members will be treated as compulsory.
  - ii. Additional training and development opportunities will be offered to equip members for their particular duties and responsibilities.
  - iii. Induction and training will be offered on a range of dates and times, including evening as well as daytime sessions.
  - iv. Presenters will strive to ensure that training is interactive, engaging and caters for a range of learning styles.
  - v. Feedback from members will inform the content and delivery of induction and training sessions.

### **Compulsory induction and training**

3. Welcome sessions for new members will be held in the week after Oxford City Council elections and will be followed by a programme of induction training to equip new members with the skills and knowledge they need for their term of office as a councillor. This will include training on finance, safeguarding and values and behaviours.
4. New members will be expected to complete all elements of the induction programme by the end of July in the year in which they are elected unless the Head of Law and Governance agrees that special circumstances apply.
5. Returning members will as a minimum arrange to sign their oath of office prior to the Annual Council meeting and may attend an initial induction session should they wish to do so. Returning members will also be encouraged to attend the induction training, particularly where they have not previously attended training on the topics covered.
6. Training on the Code of Conduct and planning will be compulsory for all members on a biennial basis. Licensing training will be compulsory for members appointed to licensing committees on an annual basis. Members who have not attended the compulsory planning or licensing training will be barred from sitting on planning committees and licensing sub-committees respectively until they have done so.

7. Compulsory training may be required more frequently where there are changes to policy, legislation or Government guidance and the Head of Law and Governance determines that training on such changes is necessary and cannot wait until the next scheduled training on that topic.
8. Members elected in by-elections held separately from City Council elections will be offered an initial induction session and compulsory training on an individual basis on the Code of Conduct, planning and, if appointed to a licensing committee, licensing. Induction training on finance, safeguarding and values and behaviours will not be offered on an individual basis but their attendance when this training is next held will be treated as compulsory.
9. The programme of compulsory induction and training over the course of a members' term of office is set out in Table 1.

**Table 1: Programme of compulsory induction and training by term of office**

	<i>Year of term of office</i>			
	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Year 3</i>	<i>Year 4</i>
Induction welcome	✓*	✗	✗	✗
Induction training: Safeguarding	✓*	✗	✗	✗
Induction training: Finance	✓*	✗	✗	✗
Induction training: Values & behaviours	✓*	✗	✗	✗
Code of Conduct	✓	✗	✓	✗
Planning	✓	✗	✓	✗
Licensing (members of licensing committees only)	✓	✓	✓	✓

*\*Compulsory for new members only but all members will be encouraged to attend*

10. The programme of compulsory induction and training to be delivered in each year of this scheme is set out in Table 2.

**Table 2: Programme of compulsory induction and training by year**

	<i>Induction</i>	<i>Code of Conduct</i>	<i>Planning</i>	<i>Licensing</i>
<b>2020</b>	New members elected in 2020 (all members will be encourage to attend)	All members	All members	All members appointed to licensing committees
<b>2021</b>				All members appointed to licensing committees



<b>2022</b>	New members elected in 2022	All members	All members	All members appointed to licensing committees
<b>2023</b>				All members appointed to licensing committees
<b>2024</b>	New members elected in 2024	All members	All members	All members appointed to licensing committees

11. An overview of the timing and indicative content of the induction and training is set out in Table 3. In addition the Council will seek to respond to any new or emerging training needs that are identified (e.g. from member feedback) over the period of this scheme where resources allow.

**Table 3: Indicative timing and content of compulsory induction and training**

<b><i>Compulsory session (delivered by)</i></b>	<b><i>Timings</i></b>	<b><i>Indicative content</i></b>
Induction welcome  (Chief Executive & Law and Governance. All directors and heads of service will be invited to meet new members)	Before the Annual Council meeting for new members only  Choice of one daytime and one evening session – 3 to 6 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Oath of office (for all members)</li> <li>• Form completion</li> <li>• Photo and issuing of ID/fob</li> <li>• Issuing of ICT equipment and training on its use</li> <li>• Code of Conduct training</li> <li>• Overview of the Council</li> <li>• Key issues for the Council</li> <li>• Video clips of member interviews and Council meetings</li> </ul>
Induction training: safeguarding  (Corporate Policy, Partnership and Communications)	By end July -choice of various dates and times – 1.5 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What safeguarding means</li> <li>• Safeguarding duties</li> <li>• Governance (OSCB and OSAB)</li> <li>• Protocols and procedures</li> <li>• Figures for Oxfordshire</li> <li>• Categories of abuse</li> <li>• Risk factors</li> <li>• Reporting concerns</li> </ul>
Induction training: finance  (Financial Services)	By end July - choice of various dates and times – 1.5 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of the Council's finances (General Fund, HRA and Capital)</li> <li>• Income and expenditure</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debt profile / borrowing</li> <li>• Investments</li> <li>• Rents</li> <li>• Budget setting</li> <li>• Capital process</li> <li>• Signing off the accounts</li> <li>• Risk management</li> </ul>
<p>Induction training: values and behaviours</p> <p>(external trainer / Organisational Development)</p>	<p>By end July - choice of various dates and times – 1.5 hours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Sector Equality Duty and the Equality Act</li> <li>• Unconscious bias</li> <li>• Lone working principles</li> </ul>
<p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>(Law and Governance)</p>	<p>As part of the welcome and induction session for new members</p> <p>By end July for returning members - choice of various dates and times 1.5 hours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seven principles of public life</li> <li>• General obligations</li> <li>• Members' interests</li> <li>• Dispensations</li> <li>• Complaint handling arrangements</li> <li>• Standards Committee</li> <li>• Outside bodies</li> <li>• Media communications</li> <li>• Use of information</li> <li>• Data Protection</li> <li>• Member-officer protocol</li> </ul>
<p>Planning</p> <p>(Planning Services and / or an external trainer)</p>	<p>Prior to the first committee meeting for members of planning committees</p> <p>By the end July for other members - choice of various dates and times</p> <p>2 hours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service overview</li> <li>• National Planning Policy Framework</li> <li>• Local Plan and planning policy</li> <li>• Growth Strategy</li> <li>• Community Infrastructure Levy</li> <li>• Development management</li> <li>• Planning committees</li> <li>• Planning applications</li> <li>• Material considerations</li> <li>• Decision making</li> <li>• Conditions</li> <li>• Planning Code of Practice</li> <li>• Bias and predetermination</li> </ul>
<p>Licensing</p>	<p>Two half-day sessions prior to the first case work sub-committee meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licensing functions</li> <li>• Licensing committees</li> <li>• Role of councillors</li> <li>• Licensing policy</li> </ul>

(external trainer / Regulatory Services & Community Safety)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hearings</li> <li>• Decision making</li> <li>• Licensing objectives</li> <li>• Conditions</li> <li>• Fit and proper test</li> </ul>
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### Additional training and development opportunities

12. Additional skills based non-compulsory training opportunities will be made available to members to support them in their specific roles as a councillor. This will include training delivered in house by officers or external trainers. The focus of additional training and development will be informed by feedback from members on their development needs and priorities. An indicative programme of additional training is set out in Table 4.
13. Subject to the allocation of budget and the agreement of their Group Leader, members may also access external training courses and events relevant to their special responsibilities or the reasonable learning and development of a councillor.

**Table 4: Indicative programme of additional training**

<b><i>Non-compulsory session (delivered by)</i></b>	<b><i>Indicative timings</i></b>	<b><i>Indicative content</i></b>
Thematic planning issues in depth  (Planning Services)	At intervals avoiding post-election periods – 1.5 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting reports and material considerations</li> <li>• Key urban design principles</li> <li>• Permitted development and enforcement</li> <li>• Planning viability assessments</li> </ul>
Audit training  (Financial Services)	Prior to or following the first meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee – 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of Audit and Governance</li> <li>• Internal and external audit</li> <li>• Risk management</li> <li>• Annual Governance Statement</li> <li>• Statement of Accounts</li> </ul>
Appointments training  (external provider / Organisational Development)	Annually when new members are appointed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unconscious bias</li> </ul>
Scrutiny training  (Law and Governance)	On a one to one basis prior to the second meeting of the Scrutiny Committee – 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What Scrutiny is</li> <li>• Key values and aims</li> <li>• Powers</li> <li>• Operating principles</li> <li>• Work programming</li> <li>• Call in process</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of Scrutiny members</li> <li>• Role of supporting officers</li> </ul>
<p>Social media training (Corporate Policy, Partnership and Communications)</p>	<p>Following the delivery of compulsory training in election years – 1 hour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting started on social media</li> <li>• Building engagement and two-way dialogue</li> <li>• The legalities of using social media</li> <li>• Social media protocol for councillors</li> </ul>
<p>Media skills training for new Cabinet Members (Corporate Policy, Partnership and Communications / external trainer)</p>	<p>As requested following the appointment of new Cabinet Members – 1 hour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview skills including a mock interview</li> <li>• Guidance on media releases</li> </ul>
<p>Chairing skills training for new committee chairs (External trainer / Law and Governance)</p>	<p>As requested following the appointment of new committee chairs – 2 to 3 hours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role and purpose</li> <li>• Time management and preparation</li> <li>• Protocols and the Constitution</li> <li>• Managing challenging contributions and controversial meetings</li> </ul>
<p>Lord Mayor / First Citizen training (External trainer / Civic Office)</p>	<p>As required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairing Council meetings</li> <li>• Meeting procedures</li> <li>• Speeches for public engagements</li> <li>• Handling the media</li> </ul>
<p>Leadership (LGA)</p>	<p>Available to the Leader and Deputy Leader(s) as required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current challenges faced by local government</li> <li>• Leadership behaviours, strategies, skills and mind-set</li> </ul>
<p>Personal safety training (External trainer / Organisational Development)</p>	<p>July-September 2020  In election years in March prior to City Council elections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lone working</li> <li>• Risks and hazards</li> <li>• Recognising warning signs</li> <li>• Conflict management</li> </ul>
<p>Service overviews (Housing Services, Community Services)</p>	<p>May – July in election years – Half day offered twice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of Housing and Homelessness Services &amp; the Housing Group</li> <li>• Overview of Community Services</li> </ul>

& Oxford Direct Services)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of Oxford Direct Services</li> </ul>
Briefings on topical issues  (various services)	Generally monthly on briefing dates set by Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key issues for the city and the Council – to be informed by feedback from members and senior officers.</li> </ul>
ICT equipment  (Business Improvement)	At induction for new members – 1 hours  Drop in sessions or formal training – 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of devices, phones and PCs</li> <li>• Use of Outlook</li> <li>• Document management</li> <li>• Settings</li> <li>• Wifi access</li> <li>• Printing</li> <li>• ICT Acceptable Use Policy</li> </ul>
Committee software  (Law and Governance)	At induction for new members.  Drop in sessions as required - 1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of app</li> <li>• Setting up committees</li> <li>• Public and private applications</li> <li>• Document library</li> <li>• Use of extranet</li> <li>• Annotating documents</li> </ul>

## Further induction support and resources

14. All newly elected members will be issued with a welcome pack including details of the induction programme, various forms for completion and essential information about the Council including its corporate priorities, senior management structure, committee remits, the Council companies and contact details for the various services.
15. All new members will be paired with a “buddy” from within the Committee and Member Services team who will provide general support through the induction process with reference to a checklist of items for new members to do or be aware of.
16. Members appointed to Cabinet for the first time will be paired with a buddy from within the senior management team to support them in that role.
17. Committee and Member Services will maintain an online “resource library” with up to date information for members including training and briefing materials.

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## Buddying checklist

Councillor		
Buddy		
Topic		Date completed / returned
1.	iPad - set up & use	
2.	Phone - set up & use	
3.	Mod Gov – set up & use (agenda paper access / private papers (yellow pages or pink on screen) / calendar download / library)	
4.	Extranet	
5.	Register of Members' Interests	
6.	Councillors' private & confidential information	
7.	Councillors' bank details	
8.	Councillor website profile	
9.	Stationery orders	
10.	Compulsory training dates – are they booked?	
11.	Optional training & briefing dates – are they booked? Do they know what is on offer?	
12.	Introduction to Service Areas – are they attending?	
13.	Meeting with Anita – do they want one?	
14.	Members' Allowance – have they been paid? Do they know how to make a claim?	
15.	Ward Member CIL – do they understand the system and what they can do? Do they know about call-in?	
16.	Town Hall / Members' Room /SAC – do they know their way around?	
17.	Are they happy with their Committee allocation? - if not explain how they change it via Group and then Council	
18.	Planning: call-in of delegated applications from the weekly list – do they understand what the process?	
19.	Planning: do they know how to view application details on the portal?	
20.	Council services – do they know how to contact? Phone	

	directory / app / staff directory?	
21.	Do they know who the key officers are for their committees / areas of interest?	
22.	Committees – do they know how they operate? Are they confident about how to participate?	
23.	Council – do they know how it works? Are they confident about how to participate?	
24.	Constitution – can they find it? Do they know how to use it?	
25.	Council Companies and Joint Ventures	
26.	Partnerships / Oxfordshire Growth Deal	
27.	Outside Bodies – have they been appointed to one? Do they understand the role & responsibilities	
<b>Councillors with known disabilities/ special requirements</b>		
28.	Is ICT arrangement acceptable?	
29.	Do they want / have they had a meeting with OH?	
30.	Do they need any other support in Members’ Room or Town Hall?	
31.	Do they know about the taxi account?	
32.	Does the member require a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)?	
<b>Buddying complete – review and sign off</b>		
		<b>Date</b> <b>Initials</b>
Initial discussion		
Before/after first committee meeting(s)		
After 1 month		
After 3 months		
Buddying complete – review and sign off by Manager, Committee & Member Services		



## Personal safety guidance for elected members

### 1. Recognising warning signs

Whenever you are out and about visiting or canvassing alone, you should be alive to the potential risks presented by those who may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, have mental health conditions, or where dangerous animals may be present. The main hazards are:

- Risk of verbal attack
- Injury from physical attack
- Being held against your will
- Attack from animals
- Sudden illness
- Accidents - Slips, trips and falls
- Risk of false accusations

A useful approach to assessing risk to your personal safety is to think about the three primary elements that contribute to personal safety (People, Environment, Task). When lone working, don't forget your PET!

### 2. Preparing for canvassing / visits

- Plan your work. Let others know your route and what time you expect to end.
- Dress appropriately and wear flat or low heeled shoes or boots which will not inhibit you if you need to run.
- Avoid drawing attention to yourself and be as inconspicuous as possible if visiting or canvassing alone. If the intention is to be conspicuous it is advisable to conduct visits or canvassing in pairs or groups.
- Look confident and be alert to your surroundings.
- Avoid carrying a personal bag or handbag.
- When it is dark, stay in well-lit areas and ensure you have a torch. Avoid poorly lit underpasses or short cuts.
- Carry a mobile phone, and ensure it is fully charged and readily accessible

### 3. Canvassing and in surgeries

Fear manifests itself in both a mental and physical reaction. If you start to feel uneasy, you are probably picking up danger or warning signals. Assess the situation by asking yourself:

- Is the person's anger directed at me?
- Are they upset rather than angry?

## Appendix 3

- Do I feel in danger? If you do, leave and seek help immediately.

Do not underestimate someone's hostility. Do not respond aggressively. Aggression increases the likelihood of confrontation.

Stay calm. Do not raise your voice. Speak clearly and slowly. Avoid being drawn into an argument. Try to talk the problem through and aim to placate the person and avoid aggressive body language, e.g. crossed arms, hands on hips, pointing - these tend to incite anger. Try to use open gestures, keeping your palms facing upwards.

**Remember if you feel in danger at any time – WITHDRAW from the situation and retreat to a position of safety.**

- **When walking** - Always take the safe route on paths where other people are around. Do not take short cuts and always use recognised pedestrian crossings.
- **When parking** – Park your bicycle or vehicle in a well-lit area and if possible, in such a manner to ensure you can cycle or drive away unimpeded. If parking in a dead-end street or cul-de-sac, face the exit.
- **Going into peoples' homes / premises** – Make sure you notify colleagues where you are going and how long you are likely to be.
  - Be alert to dangers and always introduce yourself and explain the reason for your visit.
  - Do not continue speaking to the person if they are inappropriately dressed.
  - If you meet someone in an enclosed space, stay near the exit door, if possible. Make sure you know how to get out in an emergency.
  - If you are concerned, retreat.
  - If there are dogs, ask the owner for the dog(s) to be shut in another room. Do not enter any home / premise if the dog(s) are exhibiting signs of aggression.
- **Dealing with Aggression / Violence** – Keep your distance, never touch or turn your back on someone who is angry. Never put your hands up as this can be seen as an act of aggression, try to escape immediately and get to a place of safety where you know there will be people.

### 4. Further resources

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust is a recognized organisation, where further information can be found about lone working and personal safety

<https://www.suzylamplugh.org/> in addition to the Health and Safety Executive  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/lone.htm>

**Extract from the Minutes of a meeting of the  
STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
on Monday 21 October 2019**

**Committee members:**

Councillor Aziz (Chair)

Councillor Gotch

Councillor Taylor

Councillor Pressel (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Kennedy

Councillor Simm

**Officers:**

Anita Bradley, Monitoring Officer

Andrew Brown, Committee and Member Services Manager

Catherine Phythian, Committee Services Officer

**Also present:**

Jill McCleery (Independent Person)

**Apologies:**

Chris Ballinger sent apologies.

The Chair (Cllr Aziz) had sent apologies for lateness and in her absence the Vice-Chair (Cllr Pressel) assumed the Chair and opened the meeting.

**10. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**11. Member training - Agreement of principles for the 2020-24  
member training scheme**

**Member Development**

The Committee was supportive of the view that it had a role to play in identifying members' development needs and shaping a member training programme to enable all

## Appendix 4

elected representatives to meet the challenges facing them and to support their work in committee, in their ward and in Council in the 2020s.

The Committee acknowledged that its members should work within their political groups to encourage and promote the importance and benefit of all training, not just that relating to ethical standards, amongst their colleagues.

### **Compulsory training**

The Committee considered that Code of Conduct, Planning and Licencing training should be compulsory training for councillors and that the following topics might be added to the list of compulsory training:

- Finance (to provide an introduction to local authority finances, the budget process and medium term financial plan)
- Safeguarding
- Ethical Values and Behaviours (to include issues such as equality and diversity, unconscious bias, anti-Semitism, misogyny)

The Committee acknowledged the risks associated with introducing too large a programme of compulsory training but felt that all of the topics identified were of sufficient importance to be included in a compulsory training programme.

The Committee then considered the frequency and scheduling of a compulsory training programme. They felt that the current arrangement of compulsory training on planning every 2 years was reasonable but that the frequency of compulsory training on Code of Conduct (currently annual) could be reduced. Consideration should be given to the proposal that all councillors (whether newly elected or re-elected) should only receive each of the compulsory training modules in their first year of office. Recognition should also be given to those councillors who brought transferrable skills and experience from their professional life or other roles in community or public service.

### **Non-compulsory training**

The Committee suggested that non-compulsory training should be offered to all councillors on an annual basis. These sessions should:

- meet any identified behavioural or cultural issues and any skills gaps
- address any new or emerging issues of relevance to the Council
- provide specialist knowledge on particular themes (e.g. within planning) that built on the information provided as part of the compulsory programme

### **Induction**

The Committee recognised the importance of induction training in setting the culture of the Council and the behaviours of councillors and agreed that the induction programme should be compulsory. The Committee was satisfied that the revised format and scheduling for the induction sessions that had been introduced in 2018 should be replicated in 2020 – 2024.

The Committee asked officers to review the “induction” arrangements for a member elected as a result of a by-election to ensure that, as far as possible, it reflected the standard programme.

## Appendix 4

### **Buddying**

The Committee considered that the informal buddying arrangements between newly elected councillors and members of the Committee and Member Services team had been a constructive initiative which complemented any mentoring arrangements within the political groups. The Committee confirmed that the arrangements should be in place for newly elected councillors in May 2020.

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## Minutes of a meeting of the STANDARDS COMMITTEE on Monday 21 October 2019

www.oxford.gov.uk



### Committee members:

Councillor Aziz (Chair)

Councillor Pressel (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Gotch

Councillor Kennedy

Councillor Taylor

Councillor Simm

### Officers:

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### Also present:

Jill McCleery (Independent Person)

### Apologies:

Chris Ballinger sent apologies.

The Chair (Cllr Aziz) had sent apologies for lateness and in her absence the Vice-Chair (Cllr Pressel) assumed the Chair and opened the meeting.

## 10. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## 11. Code of Conduct: summary of complaints and individual dispensations - 31 May 2019 until 30 September 2019

The Monitoring Officer presented the information report on the number of complaints received under the Members' Code of Conduct and the number of dispensations to an individual member, granted under Section 33 of the 2011 Localism Act.

The Monitoring Officer referred the Committee to paragraphs 4 to 8 of the report which summarised the single complaint (reference 15202) that had been settled through informal resolution since 31 May 2019. The Monitoring Officer considered that the case did give rise to a wider learning point: that if a member introduced themselves or presented themselves as a councillor to a member of the public then the Code of Conduct would be engaged even if the context of that introduction was not in any way related to the business of the City Council. This learning point would be included in future Code of Conduct training.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that no requests for individual dispensations had been received.

On a related point the Committee asked the Monitoring Officer to clarify the rules on declarations by members of the planning committees if they were employees of the University of Oxford or Oxford Brookes University in respect of planning applications from either of those institutions. The Monitoring Officer explained that this was a matter of personal choice for the member(s) concerned and that there was no requirement in law to make such a declaration unless the nature of the employment had a direct influence on the substance of the application. This view was supported by case law relating to the City Council's consideration of a University of Oxford application.

The Monitoring Officer said that she would be circulating written advice on this point to all members of Council.

**The Standards Committee resolved to note the report.**

Councillor Aziz arrived at the end of this item.

## **12. Review of Member training in Quarter 2 2019/20**

Councillor Aziz assumed the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer presented the report which detailed the programme of training delivered to members in Q2 2019/20.

The Committee discussion centred on the low attendance levels for member briefings and some of the optional training sessions and considered what measures could be introduced to improve member attendance. The Committee felt that there was a role for the leadership within the political groups to promote and encourage attendance by their members, especially in relation to courses provided by external trainers.

It was recognised that there had been several briefing sessions offered over recent months and that the low attendance levels might be due to over exposure. The Committee and Member Services team were asked to review the scheduling and content of the regular member briefing sessions.

**The Standards Committee resolved to note** the review of the programme of training delivered to members in Q2 2019/20.

## **13. Member training - Agreement of principles for the 2020-24 member training scheme**

### **Member Development**

The Committee was supportive of the view that it had a role to play in identifying members' development needs and shaping a member training programme to enable all



elected representatives to meet the challenges facing them and to support their work in committee, in their ward and in Council in the 2020s.

The Committee acknowledged that its members should work within their political groups to encourage and promote the importance and benefit of all training, not just that relating to ethical standards, amongst their colleagues.

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The Committee suggested that non-compulsory training should be offered to all councillors on an annual basis. These sessions should:

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The Committee asked officers to review the “induction” arrangements for a member elected as a result of a by-election to ensure that, as far as possible, it reflected the standard programme.

**Buddying**

The Committee considered that the informal buddying arrangements between newly elected councillors and members of the Committee and Member Services team had been a constructive initiative which complemented any mentoring arrangements within the political groups. The Committee confirmed that the arrangements should be in place for newly elected councillors in May 2020.

**14. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Committee resolved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 June 2019 as a true and accurate record.

**15. Dates of future meetings**

The Committee noted the dates of the future meetings.

**The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.15 pm**

**Chair .....**

**Date:**