Minutes of the GMCA Standards Committee Meeting held
Thursday 16 March 2017 at Manchester Town Hall

Present
Geoff Linnell Co-opted Independent Member
City Mayor Paul Dennett Salford City Council
Councillor Alex Ganotis Stockport MBC
Councillor Cliff Morris Bolton Council

Also in attendance
Nicole Jackson Independent Person
Steve Hollard Senior Lawyer
Susan Ford GMIST Policy Manager
Nicola Ward GMIST Senior Democratic Services Officer

GMSC 16/10 Welcome and Apologies
The Chair welcomed members to the GMCA Standards Committee. Apologies were received from Councillor Jean Stretton and Councillor Sean Anstee.

GMSC 16/11 Declarations of interest
There were no declarations of interest in relation to any matter on the agenda.

GMSC 16/12 Minutes of the GMCA Standards Committee meeting held 3 November 2016

Resolved /

  1. To approve the minutes of the GMCA Standards Committee held on 3 November 2016.

GMSC 16/13 Code of Corporate Governance
Members received a report which provided assurance that the 2017 GMCA Code of Corporate Governance would take into account the revised requirements of the CIPFA guidance ‘Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework’ as issued in 2016.
Susan Ford, Policy Manager for the GMCA reminded the committee that the GMCA had signed off the updated code in February 2017 and were now undertaking a review of the constitution in anticipation of changes to the GMCA from April 2017. The revised code has a greater focus on social, environmental and equalities which will also have an impact on the emphasis of the Annual Governance Statement.

Once the parliamentary orders have been passed and the new powers for the GMCA and Mayor are set out there will be a requirement to update the code to detail the new arrangements.

The committee welcomed these changes and discussed how the revised code should be embedded into the work of the GMCA to ensure a visible commitment to its delivery.

There was also discussion regarding clarification as to whom the code applies to, and whether all members serving in a CA capacity should be captured by the code. Officers agreed to look at how the code could be clear in relation to this and ensure that there were no discrepancies. Further to this it was suggested that on appointment all elected members are given guidance as to how the code of conduct applies to their role.

The committee further asked that officers review the GMCA policies in relation to standards matters, and assurance is given as to their monitoring and review. It was suggested that best practice could be sought from other local authorities.

Resolved /-

1. To note the report.
2. Officers to ensure that the code is clear about which elected members are covered, and in which capacities.
3. Officers to provide guidance to all members appointed to the GMCA as to how the code of conduct applies to their role.
4. As part of the GMCA’s transition work that officers to undertake a review of the codes and protocols in the GMCA’s Constitution and provide members with an assurance map as to which bodies are responsible for their review.

**GMSC 16/14 Annual Report and Work Plan of the Committee on Standards for Public Life**

Members received a report of the GMCA Monitoring Officer which detailed the relevant information from the Annual Report of the Committee on Standards for Public Life.

Steve Hollard, Principal Lawyer for the GMCA reported that the role of the Independent Person had generally been well received, with the number of vexatious complaints to local authorities falling. However, the effectiveness of the sanctions regime remained a concern and the committee planned to continue to invite local authorities to consider whether their own standards regimes are sufficient.
A member raised the role of political whips in regards to maintaining standards on behalf of the GMCA and suggested that this role be discussed where appropriate.

Resolved /-

1. To note the report

**GMSC 16/15 Date of future meetings**

The Chair suggested that provisional dates be set for quarterly meetings of the GMCA Standards Committee which would be used as required.

These dates would be subject to approval from the members appointed by the GMCA at their AGM in June 2017.

Resolved /-

1. Provisional dates for the GMCA Standards Committee for 2017/18 are –

   Thursday 2 November 2017
   Thursday 15 March 2018