

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Value and Ethics Sub-Committee



30 September 2019 at 12pm.

Members Present:-

Councillors Abraham (Substitute for Councillor Radford), Brain, Clough, Stevens.

Independent Member and Chair – Adebola Adebayo.

Officers in Attendance:-

Lucy Fleming – Head of Legal Services, Nick Mimmack – Legal Services, Allison Taylor – Democratic Services

1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

These were made and it was noted that the Independent Member Adebola Adebayo had agreed to Chair the Sub-Committee for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

2. Apologies for Absence

These were received from Councillor Radford with Councillor Abraham as substitute.

3. Declarations of Interest

None were received.

4. Minutes – of 26 March 2019.

Resolved – These were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

5. Update regarding Member Development.

The Head of Democratic Engagement introduced the report stating that it contained a broad draft of the Member Induction programme for the cohort of Members who would begin a new term of office following the 2020 elections as well as ongoing activity for the current Municipal Year. She highlighted that the Member Development Steering Group had authorised the recruitment of a Member Development Officer for 12 months to deliver the programme. The detail of the methodology and training was being worked up.



The following points arose from discussion:-

1. Councillor Brain remarked that the member training had been excellent in the past but cuts had caused it to deteriorate and he was very pleased to see these proposed improvements;
2. The Committee agreed that it would be useful for experienced members to act as mentors for new members and was confident that there would be volunteers;
3. Finally, it was confirmed that 35 of the 70 DBS checks on members had been done.

Resolved – That the update regarding Member Development be noted.

6. Outside Bodies.

The representative of the Head of Legal Services reported that previous guidance had been drafted but not completed and welcomed comment from this completed draft.

The following points arose from discussion:-

1. Councillor Stevens, in reference to his previous role as a Non-Executive Director on Bristol Port Company, referred to paragraph 4.3 of the guidance and noted that this had been amended from the previous document but he was not convinced that this was an improvement. The representative of the Head of Legal Services replied that the previous draft had lacked nuance. He reminded the Committee that he had stood down from this role as he believed there was a conflict with it and his role as a BCC Councillor;
2. Councillor Brain observed that part of the responsibility of a BCC Councillor on the Port of Bristol Committee was to be a shareholder representative for the City Council's finances so it was not possible to ignore that role;
3. Councillor Abraham stated that Councillors serving on an outside body were not there to represent their constituency. He believed that the onus was on the Outside Body to produce a paper which clarified the duties and responsibilities of a role and then BCC could decide if it wished to be represented on it;
4. Discussion took place regarding Councillors sitting on charitable organisations and it was noted that this was an individual Councillor decision and not the responsibility of BCC. Councillor Abraham suggested that the new Councillors should be advised to seek information on a charity before making a decision;
5. It was agreed that members make any further comments to the representative of the Head of Legal Services and the final document would be available before the inductions sessions.

Resolved – That the guidance be approved for publication and circulation to all members.

7. Any Other Business.

Councillor Stevens referred to the previous minutes – Chair's Business and the matters raised by Councillor Negus, a previous member of the Sub-Committee. Regarding point 2 on the politicising of Mayor's responses to Full Council questions it was reported that such responses were signed off by the Mayor and it was up to him if he wished to politicise them. It was agreed that the Head of legal Services come back to a future meeting on the contents on point 1.



Resolved – that the Head of Legal Services report back to a future meeting on the role of Head of Paid Service and its relationship with the Mayor.

Meeting finished at 12.40pm.

CHAIR _____

