

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCILLOR CONDUCT COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 8 AUGUST 2012**

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT Yasemin Brett (Chairman), Tom Waterhouse, Chris Murphy and Michael Rye OBE

OFFICERS: John Austin (Assistant Director Corporate Governance), Asmat Hussain (Assistant Director Legal) and Marvin Hay (Legal Officer), Jacqui Hurst (Secretary)

**187
WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

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DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

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NEW DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FORM**

John Austin, Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, presented for consideration and approval a draft Declaration of Interest form to be issued to Members following adoption of the new Members' Code of Conduct and the introduction of the requirement to register disclosable pecuniary interests.

NOTED

1. the draft declaration of interests form for Members' comments. It was noted that further guidance was awaited. It was proposed that the form would be reviewed in the next municipal year in the light of experience and any feedback received from Members;
2. a typographical error in part 2, section (d) of the form, "Harte" should read "Hate";
3. at the suggestion of Councillor Rye, an example of a completed form would also be circulated to Members to ease their completion of the new declarations of interest form;
4. a discussion took place with regard to the need to declare gifts and hospitality which were both "offered" and "taken". It was noted that this was not an annual but an on-going declaration requirement for

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Members. John Austin, Assistant Director Corporate Governance, would consider further if it was appropriate to make any reference to gifts and hospitality within this declaration of interests form. It was suggested and agreed that a reminder for Members could appear on the Members' newsletter on a monthly basis. It was felt that the requirement to declare "offered" gifts/hospitality could be useful in highlighting particular trends.

AGREED, subject to the comments detailed above, to approve the draft Declaration of Interest form.

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MEMBERS' TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Members discussed future training requirements for Members around the new Member Code of Conduct which had been adopted by Council on 4 July 2012.

AGREED, following discussion, that the preference was for training sessions be arranged at future Group meetings. This would maximise attendance by Members. The importance of attending the sessions would need to be emphasised. Members would be required to sign in to confirm their attendance. Further ad hoc training sessions could then be arranged for any Member who was unable to attend the relevant Group meeting.

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INDEPENDENT PERSON - TERM OF OFFICE & ALLOWANCE

Members noted that Council (4 July 2012) had agreed to delegate authority for the Chair of the Councillor Conduct Committee (in consultation with the Vice-Chair) to agree the term of office and allowance for the newly created position of Independent Person(s). This had been subject to clarification of the regulations relating to the appointments being sought from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government. The Committee's views on the terms of office and final level of allowance were now being sought, in advance of any final recommendation being made.

NOTED

1. John Austin advised Members that clarification of the regulations relating to the appointments had now been provided by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government. Previous Independent Members of the Standards Committees could stand for appointment but their term of office could only be until June 2013.
2. John Austin had researched a number of other local authorities with regard to the allowance paid to such independent persons. The sum of

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£500 was seen to be an average and acceptable allowance figure. Members agreed that £500 should be the sum adopted by Enfield. This could be reviewed in the future if necessary.

3. a discussion on the appropriate term of office for the newly appointed independent person(s). Members felt that it would be helpful for the term of office to overlap the term of the Council's administration. It would therefore be appropriate for a 2 year term of office to be implemented from the time of appointment.
4. in response to questions raised by Members, officers would confirm the legal status of the independent person(s) and the appropriate action to be taken should any performance/capability/sickness issues arise following appointment. It was noted that full Council would need to confirm the appointment(s) so any "de-appointment" would also need to be agreed by Council.

AGREED that

1. the independent person(s) be appointed for a two year term of office from the date of their appointment; so the earliest their term of office would expire would be September 2014.
2. The level of allowance to be adopted at £500.

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MINUTES - 13 JUNE 2012

AGREED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Councillor Conduct Committee held on 13 June 2012, be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

NOTED that future meetings of the Councillor Conduct Committee were currently scheduled to take place on:

- Wednesday 17 October 2012
- Wednesday 16 January 2013
- Thursday 14 March 2013
- Thursday 2 May 2013