Minutes of the GMCA Standards Committee Meeting held
Thursday 2 November 2017 at Churchgate House, Manchester

Present
Geoff Linnell Co-opted Independent Member
Councillor Alex Ganotis Stockport MBC
Councillor Jean Stretton Oldham Council

Also in attendance
Nicole Jackson Independent Person
Steve Hollard GMCA Lawyer
Gwynne Williams GMCA Solicitor
Tom Powell GMCA Head of Internal Audit
Nicola Ward GMCA Governance

GMSC 17/01 Welcome and Apologies
The Chair welcomed members to the GMCA Standards Committee. Apologies were received from Councillor Cliff Morris, Councillor Paul Dennett and Councillor Sean Anstee.

GMSC 17/02 Declarations of interest
There were no declarations of interest in relation to any matter on the agenda.

GMSC 17/03 Minutes of the GMCA Standards Committee meeting held 16 March 2017
Resolved /-
1. To approve the minutes of the GMCA Standards Committee held on 16 March 2017.

GMSC 17/04 Scope of Application of the GMCA Code of Conduct for Members
Members received a report of Liz Treacy, Monitoring Officer for the GMCA which briefed the committee on the scope of application of the GMCA Code of Conduct for Members as per their request at their meeting on 16 March 2017.
The committee’s comments were taken into account when the Code was updated as part of the 2017 revision of the GMCA’s Constitution. In the report to the GMCA 30 June meeting it summarised the revised Code as

“8.1 The Code of Conduct for Members has been updated. There has been clarification of who the code applies to as per the recommendation of the GMCA’s Standards Committee. It now makes clear the existing statutory position that the code applies to all voting co-opted members of GMCA committees as well as to GMCA members. It is now clear that, for example, the members of the Audit Committee and any Overview and Scrutiny Committee(s) are subject to the Code.

8.2 The revised Code of Conduct for Members also invites voluntary compliance with the code by non-voting co-opted members and by elected members of Greater Manchester district councils when they act for or represent the GMCA (such as by sitting on non-decision making bodies such as the Planning and Housing Commission).”

Steve Hollard, Senior Lawyer to the GMCA reiterated to the committee that the GMCA Code of Conduct applies to all voting co-opted members of GMCA committees as well as GMCA members. Those members who have been appointed to non-decision making bodies and all independent members would be invited to voluntary comply with the Code. He confirmed that sanctions can be applied to all members including those who voluntary comply.

Members thanked officers for this clarification, but asked whether all members of the GMCA and its committees were now compliant i.e. voting co-opted members, substitutes, deputy portfolio holders. Further to this, whether those who would be required to voluntary comply, have completed the relevant paperwork.

A member asked whether the GMCA’s Gifts and Hospitality Policy is up to date and that all members are aware of their requirements to disclose.

It was suggested that there be a basic summary of the Code circulated to all members of the GMCA and its committees to ensure that they are all aware of their obligations.

A member sought further clarification on the role of the Assistant Portfolio Holders and which meetings they were invited to attend. It was suggested that a training session on this subject as part of a member induction programme would be useful. Further to this, whether there could be an item on the agenda of each of the committee’s first meeting reminding members of their obligations under the Code.

Resolved /-

1. To note the report.
2. That the Governance Team will check which members are required to comply with the Code of Conduct, voluntary or legally and bring some assurance to the next meeting.
3. That the Governance Team check that all members are aware of their obligations to disclose gifts and hospitality to the GMCA.
4. That the Legal Team develop a short and simple document which can be circulated to all members of the GMCA and its committees to explain their obligations under the Code.
5. That the Governance Team provide further information to Assistant Portfolio Holders as to which meetings they are invited to attend in their role.
6. That the Governance Team schedule a member induction for all members of the GMCA and its committees early in the municipal year, and include training on the Code of Governance, and consider the suggestion to include an item on the agenda of the first meeting of each of the committees reminding members of their obligations under the Code.

**GMSC 17/05  Annual Report and Work Plan of the Committee on Standards in 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 Committee retain their watching brief over Local Government standards.

Members discussed how in the context of devolution there should be a greater emphasis on Local Government within the report. Officers offered to feed this back through the consultation.

**Resolved /-**

1. To note the report.
2. That the Legal Team feed back the views of the committee through the consultation on the Annual Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

**GMSC 17/06  GMCA Standards Committee Work Programme**

Nicola Ward, Governance Officer for the GMCA took members through the Work Programme for the GMCA Standards Committee which had been based around those policies to which the committee have a remit for reviewing as per their terms of reference.

Members commented that the work programme of the Manchester City Council’s Standards Committee details all sub sections of the Code of Conduct, i.e. gifts and hospitality, member/officer relations etc. Each policy is reviewed against its operation and procedures on an annual basis and in depth every three years. It was suggested that the GMCA Standards Committee work programme could be expanded to include those sub sections from the GMCA’s Code.
The committee asked for assurance that if it was not their role in reviewing a particular policy, that they were clear as to by which committee this would be done.

Resolved /-

1. To note the report.
2. That the Governance Team produce a detailed work programme based on the sub-sections of the Code of Conduct and bring it to the next meeting for review.

GMSC 17/07 Any other business

There was no additional business.

GMSC 17/08 Dates of future meetings

Resolved /-

1. The next meeting of the GMCA Standards Committee is scheduled for Thursday 15 March 2018.