

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GMCA STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD  
ON FRIDAY 13 DECEMBER 2024**

**Present:**

Geoff Linnell	Independent Member
Councillor Nick Peel	Bolton
Councillor Arooj Shah	Oldham
Councillor Mark Hunter	Stockport

**Also present:**

Gillian Duckworth	Group Solicitor & Monitoring Officer
Sarah Bennett	Deputy Monitoring Officer, GMCA
Nicola Ward	Statutory Scrutiny Officer, GMCA

**GMSC/01/24      Apologies**

**RESOLVED/-**

Apologies were received and noted from Councillor Bev Craig (Manchester).

**GMSC/02/24      Chairs Announcements and Urgent Business**

**RESOLVED/-**

There were no chairs announcements or urgent business.

**GMSC/03/24      Declarations of Interest**

**RESOLVED/-**

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any item on the agenda.

**GMSC/04/24      Terms of Reference**

**RESOLVED/-**

That the Terms of Reference for the GMCA Standards Committee be noted.

**GMSC/05/24            Minutes of the GMCA Standards Committee 15 December 2023**

**RESOLVED/-**

That the minutes of the GMCA Standards Committee meeting held on 15 December 2023 be approved.

**GMSC/06/24            GMCA Standards Committee Work Programme**

Nicola Ward, GMCA Statutory Scrutiny Officer took members through their work programme, which also included a look-back at the work they had undertaken since 2019. Members were asked to consider which areas of business they would like to consider at their forthcoming meetings.

The Group Solicitor & Monitoring Officer proposed that an Annual Report be brought to a future meeting of the Committee detailing any standards issues that had arisen throughout the year and highlighting any future training or development needs. Members agreed that it was good governance to report back on any standards issues and to hold to account any member who had breached the code of conduct.

**RESOLVED/-**

1. That the work programme be noted.
2. That an annual standards report be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

**GMSC/07/24            GMCA Code of Conduct**

Gillian Duckworth, Group Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, introduced a report which presented the GMCA's Code of Conduct, recently updated in 2023 in line with the Local Government Association's Model Code. Members were informed that since the adoption of the model code there had been no further changes to guidance and were therefore asked to consider whether it still reflected best practice.

It was noted that there was a typo within the appendix to the Code of Conduct that detailed the seven principles of public life and officers agreed to ensure this was rectified.

**RESOLVED/-**

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the typo on page 32 of the report (page 281 of the Constitution) be addressed.

**GMSC/08/24            Gifts & Hospitality**

Gillian Duckworth, Group Solicitor and Monitoring Officer presented a report which detailed the GMCA's constitutional rules in relation to the acceptance of gifts and hospitality. It also provided members with the protocol by which any gifts or hospitality received by an elected member in their GM capacity was recorded and published on the GMCA website.

In line with this protocol, members were asked to consider amending the constitution so that each offer of hospitality could be judged on its own merits. The Group Solicitor & Monitoring Officer would determine whether the offer of hospitality was appropriate, however, this would be reported to the GMCA Standards Committee within the annual report. The Constitution also states that the Monitoring Officer is able to consult the Chair of the Standards Committee regarding the retention of any gift received over the value of £100.

Members questioned how the threshold of £100 had been determined, officers explained that this was in line with the thresholds set by other GM Local Authorities and also other Combined Authorities.

The Chair commented that elected members should ensure that their gifts and hospitality were first and foremost recorded by their local authority and that those instances where they are acting in a GM capacity should also be recorded by the GMCA. In doing so there would be complete transparency, and local governance

teams would be completely aware of all gifts and hospitality offered and received. In line with this, it was suggested that the GMCA policy and protocol be shared with governance teams across local authorities for their information.

**RESOLVED/-**

1. That the suggested amendments to the Gifts & Hospitality rules contained within the GMCA Constitution be recommended to the GMCA for approval.
2. That the updated Gifts and Hospitality Policy and Protocol be shared with governance teams across the GM Local Authorities for information.