

Standards Committee

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Request for Dispensation

Purpose of Report

1. To consider a request from elected members for a dispensation.

Background

2. Within the last few days the Council has announced its proposals arising from the Primary School Review. These proposals affect a number of schools within the borough including the closure of some schools.
3. Many elected members are governors of primary schools and a number are likely to have a prejudicial interest in this matter under the Members Code of Conduct.
4. Discussions on the proposals are likely to take place at Area Committees, the Select Committee on Lifelong Learning, the Cabinet and the full Council.
5. The political groups on the Council are anxious that every member should be given an opportunity to contribute to the discussion on these proposals and have asked for the Standards Committee to consider granting a dispensation which would allow members with a prejudicial interest to speak at meetings of the Council, its committees and the Cabinet, and to vote.
6. The Regulations which govern the grant of dispensations empower the Standards Committee to do so if the transaction of business of the Council would otherwise be impeded because the declaration of prejudicial interests would upset the proportional balance of the Council or its committees.

7. If the Standards Committee is minded to grant a dispensation to all members who are governors of primary schools within the borough, it is proposed that the dispensation be for a period of six months during which time the period of consultation will have elapsed and a decision will have been made regarding the proposals.

Finance

8. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Law

9. The relevant provisions regarding the grant of dispensations to members who have prejudicial interests are contained in the Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) (Dispensations) Regulations 2001.

Equality Impact

10. This report complies with the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

Recommendation

11. It is recommended that:-

- The Standards Committee consider the application for dispensation set out in this report.

John Polychronakis

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John Polychronakis
Monitoring Officer

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List of Background Papers

1. Requests from the three political groups for a dispensation