

## **ADDENDUM ITEM 4c 2017 MEMBER ANNUAL SURVEY**

### **NOTE FROM ANNUAL MEETING WITH POLITICAL GROUP LEADERS AND WHIPS**

The Committee invites Group Leaders and Whips to meet with it informally, on an annual basis, to discuss issues relating to Members' conduct and ethics. A meeting was held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2018, and issues and observations discussed included:

- The observed improvement in Members' conduct and the quality of debate at Council meetings was welcomed.
- The reduction in the number of formal complaints was very encouraging.
- The results of the Members Survey 2017 in relation to Member conduct issues indicated some positive trends, but also identified some level of bullying and behavioural issues.
- Many of the reported incidents appeared to relate to culture and atmosphere rather than overt discrimination, but the survey provided an opportunity to get to grips with these issues and consider how to raise awareness and address issues constructively.
- A range of different avenues were needed to address issues.
- Bullying, behavioural and discrimination matters needed to be dealt with appropriately and effectively.
- Many incidents were unintentional and resolved with an apology; and some responses appeared to relate to historical issues, and may not accurately reflect current issues.
- Some incidents appeared to relate to political group meetings, so groups should consider what support arrangements etc. they have in place for Members.
- It was suggested that the All Party Council Women's Group may wish to consider the outcomes of the Member Survey and provide feedback.
- Arrangements for separate group refreshments during Council meetings had been raised as an issue, with a suggestion that communal refreshments would facilitate better cross party working relationships. This issue had been discussed at Group Whips meetings; and it was agreed this was a matter for Group Whips to agree.
- The Committee was thanked for its time and commitment; and it was agreed that Committee Members' attendance at Council and Committee meetings was welcomed.