

Joint Standards Committee

23 June 2021

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Model Code of Conduct

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on the Model Code of Conduct.

Background

Members will recall that the Local Government Association (LGA) published a Model Code of Conduct, which can be found at Annex A. The Model Code of Conduct was considered by Members at the last Meeting of the Joint Standards Committee.

New Model Code of Conduct for Members

At the Extraordinary Council Meeting on 5 May 2021 an Action Plan was approved which had been prepared in response to the Report in the Public Interest. 5 recommendations arose from that Action Plan.

Recommendation 4 provides that the Council should ensure all Members fully understand the requirement of the Code of Conduct in relation to declaration of interests. The Actions set out within recommendation 4 include:

- The Council will work towards the adoption of the Model Code of Conduct issued by the LGA which will replace the current Code of Conduct and procedure for handling of complaints:
 - The Joint Standards Committee will oversee the implementation of the Model Code of Conduct and make recommendations via the Audit and Governance Committee to Full Council;
 - The Council will commission specialist support to assist with the development, implementation and mandatory training of all Elected members (and key officer groups) in respect of the Model Code of Conduct, awareness raising of conflicts of interest and the declaration of interests;

- Mandatory training will be required to be undertaken by all Elected Members on an annual basis;
- Guidance will be provided with all meeting agendas to assist Elected members in the identification or not, of a conflict of interest;
- The Council's induction programme following City Council elections (due to take place in May 2023) will be reviewed in line with progress and outcomes of this recommendation.

The deadline for this Action is July 2021, subject to the scheduling of a Meeting of Full Council and it is noted that the actions remain subject to ongoing review.

In order to meet the deadline within the Action to recommendation 4, the Joint Standards Committee will have a workshop with the Members, the Independent Persons, the Chair and Vice Chair of Audit and Governance Committee (the Vice Chair is also a Member of Joint Standards Committee) and Paul Hoey and Natasha Ainscough of Hoey Ainscough will be providing the specialist support to aid the Council and the Committee in delivering the Action within recommendation 4. The Chair and Vice Chair of Joint Standards Committee and the Chair and Vice Chair of Audit and Governance Committee have been consulted and are in agreement with these plans for the Meeting.

Implications

Financial

Not applicable to this report.

Human Resources (HR)

Not applicable to this report.

Equalities

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on Local Authorities. Having a clear and concise Code of Conduct which clearly prohibits unlawful discrimination gives the public confidence in Members and the Council as a whole.

Legal

As detailed within the report.

Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property

Not applicable to this report.

Recommendations

That the LGA Model Code of Conduct is noted.

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Report
Approved

Date 15 June
2021

Specialist Implications Officer(s):

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

- Annex A –Model Code of Conduct