

Joint Standards Committee

30 June 2022

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Development of a Member Training Programme for the Ethical Governance Framework

Summary

1. This report is to update the Committee on the position regarding the development of a member training programme in so far as it relates to the ethical governance framework.

Background

2. In order to continue to embed good governance, the Audit & Governance Committee has oversight of the formulation of Council's Member Development Programme as part of its role in monitoring delivery against the Action Plan. Its aim is to finalise the programme by December 2022, in readiness for the City Elections in May 2023. As the Committee is aware, the Audit & Governance Committee is also seeing the support of the Local Government Association [hereafter referred to as the LGA] in its work relating to the Action Plan. The LGA has also offered to undertake some of the training as part of this plan.

3. Ethical Governance training will be a particularly important part of the induction process immediately after the City Elections in May 2023. Subject to the Joint Standards Committee's views it is proposed that this will be a mandatory training programme for all City of York Councillors and will include:

- An understanding of the Code of Conduct including what happens if someone makes a complaint about a councillor. At present, it is envisaged that this will include information about the role of the Joint Standards Committee and their support to the Monitoring Officer;
- Register of Interests and how to declare an interest;
- Member Officer Relations Protocol;
- An awareness of the Employee Code of Conduct
- Equalities training

4. Again subject to the Committee's views delivery of the training programme is also being considered as part of this process with consideration to a combination of face to face sessions, hybrid sessions and wholly virtual sessions but with a condition that all training is recorded to be easily accessed at later dates.

5. The LGA had intended to report to the Audit & Governance Committee on 29th June 2022, however with agreement from the Chair of the Committee they are now to report on 7th September 2022. This second phase of reporting by the LGA will cover the work undertaken to demonstrate the embedding of good governance such as the delivery of a training programme. With this in mind, the council is preparing a draft training programme which can be shared with the LGA as part of their ongoing work.

6. Timeliness of the training is also crucial and whilst the aforementioned training is mandatory as part of the induction process, views of the Joint Standards Committee are sought as to frequency of the delivery of this ethical training by way of refresher during the four year cycle. Good practice would suggest that access to such training should be readily available with perhaps refresher training being delivered/promoted by the Committee on an annual basis.

Implications

Financial

7. Not applicable to this report.

Human Resources (HR)

8. Not applicable to this report.

Equalities

9. Maintaining standards across the City through the embedding of a fit for purpose ethical governance framework, which includes the Codes of Conduct, supports the council's robust decision making framework and ensures City of York Councillors and Officers are appropriately advised of their respective responsibilities.

Legal

10. As detailed within the report.

Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property

11. Not applicable to this report.

Recommendations

12. That the Joint Standards Committee considers the report and notes any views which can be shared with the Audit & Governance Committee as part of their established work plan.

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Report
Approved

Date 20 June
2022

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:

- Agendas reports and minutes of the Joint Standards Committee in so far as they relate to the Code of Conduct and supporting procedures;
- Agendas, report and minutes of the Audit & Governance Committee
- City of York Council Constitution