

Audit and Standards Committee

Tuesday 9 February 2021

10:00

Meeting to be conducted using Microsoft Teams - Microsoft Teams

NB. Attendance by the public and press is via webcast only which can be viewed here - <https://staffordshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

John Tradewell
Director of Corporate Services
29 January 2021

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 December 2020** (Pages 1 - 4)
4. **Health, Safety and Wellbeing Performance Annual Report 2019/20**

TO FOLLOW
5. **Local Government Association – Model Code of Conduct for Members – Proposed Adoption by Staffordshire County Council** (Pages 5 - 26)
6. **Forward Plan** (Pages 27 - 36)
7. **Exclusion of the Public**

The Chairman to move:-

“That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated below”.

PART TWO

8. **Exempt minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2020 (exemption paragraph 3)** (Pages 37 - 40)
9. **CareDirector - Update following Audit Reports (exemption paragraph 3)** (Pages 41 - 44)
10. **Third Party Access Policy - Progress Report (exemption paragraph 3)** (Pages 45 - 48)
11. **Information Management - Final Audit Report 2020/21 (exemption paragraph 3)** (Pages 49 - 66)

Membership

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Derek Davis, OBE | Ann Edgeller |
| Martyn Tittley (Chairman) | David Brookes |
| Carolyn Trowbridge (Vice-Chairman) | Richard Ford |
| Ross Ward | Helen Fisher |
| Bernard Williams | Philip Atkins, OBE |
| Paul Northcott | Keith Flunder |
| Susan Woodward | Keith James |
| Alastair Little | |

Note for Members of the Press and Public

Filming of Meetings

The Open (public) section of this meeting may be filmed for live or later broadcasting or other use, and, if you are at the meeting, you may be filmed, and are deemed to have agreed to being filmed and to the use of the recording for broadcast and/or other purposes.

Recording by Press and Public

Recording (including by the use of social media) by the Press and Public is permitted from the public seating area provided it does not, in the opinion of the chairman, disrupt the meeting.

Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee Meeting held on 8 December 2020

Present: Martyn Tittley (Chairman)

| Attendance | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Derek Davis, OBE | Alastair Little |
| Carolyn Trowbridge (Vice-Chairman) | Ann Edgeller |
| Ross Ward | Richard Ford |
| Bernard Williams | Philip Atkins, OBE |
| Paul Northcott | Keith Flunder |
| Susan Woodward | |

Also in attendance: Stephen Clark (Ernst Young, External Auditors)

Apologies: David Brookes and Helen Fisher

PART ONE

33. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Flunder formally recorded his involvement in discussions as the community representative on a County Council land transaction in his Division which was referred to in the Council's Strategic Property and Asset Management arrangements – see item 36.

Councillors Little and Northcote declared their membership of the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC) - see item 46.

34. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 October 2020

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

35. Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

The Director for Corporate Services presented the draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2019/20 which sets out the responsibilities of the Council, explains the aims and content of the Governance Framework, reports on the effectiveness of that framework and concludes by highlighting any significant governance issues to be addressed. Members were required to consider the AGS and make recommendations to the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive on whether it should be signed off.

The report described in detail the matters considered during the review of governance documentation and the policies and procedures adopted in place across the council to ensure compliance. It referred to reviews by outside organisations of the Council's actions such as external auditors reports, the inspection of Children's Services and the

CQC inspection of the SEND service and reported on action taken to address issues identified, giving an assessment of the effectiveness of that action.

Reporting on the key governance matters identified for attention during 2019/20 officers drew particular attention to the changes being made to the SEND service, the constant presence of cyber security risk and the need to monitor the effect of the COVID 19 emergency on the Council's MTFs and its ability to deliver services. The Director stressed the importance of member level monitoring of the resourcing and management of these issues.

RESOLVED – That the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 be approved for sign off by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive.

36. Statement of Accounts 2019/20

The County Treasurer gave a brief explanation of the format and required contents of the Council's Statement of Accounts following which he presented the formal Statement for 2019/20. He explained that due to COVID 19 the completion deadline for the accounts had been extended to 30 November 2020 (from 31 July). Along with the changes in deadline for the completion of the accounts, this year's exercise had been affected by resourcing difficulties on the part of the External Auditors. This was a recognised national issue which action was being taken to address and may result in a permanent change to completion deadlines.

Referring to the Statement of Accounts itself, the County Treasurer highlighted the minor surplus of £6.3million on the Income and Expenditure statement and the position of the overall Balance Sheet explaining that the apparent significant increase in net assets merely reflected a 'snap shot in time' at 31 March following receipt of cash for central government to support COVID 19 related activities.

Referring to the effect of COVID on the Council's funds, the County Treasurer explained that for 2020/21 no significant adverse effects were expected due to government grants however the position from 2021/2022 onwards was more difficult to predict as the effect of COVID on receipts from Council Tax and Business Rates was unknown. In addition, the longer term impact of COVID on the local community and consequent service demands was unknown, as was any on-going funding proposals to address those consequences.

The County Treasurer also submitted the Statement of Accounts 2019/20 for the Staffordshire Pension Fund, reminding members of the relatively recent requirement for this Fund to have its own independent accounting/reporting arrangements. He reported that the value of the Fund as at 31 March 2020 was £4.744bn and had increased since that time, reflecting more positive market activity. As Chairman of the Pensions Committee, Mr Little was able to report that the funding level (ie the extent to which the Fund was able to meet its liabilities) currently sat at 96%.

RESOLVED – That:

- (i) the Statements of Accounts 2019/20 for both Staffordshire County Council and the Staffordshire Pension Fund be approved

- (ii) the County Treasurer's draft letter of representation to the external Auditors be approved
- (iii) the County Treasurer, in consultation with the Chairman, be authorised to make any amendments to the Accounts, as deemed necessary by the External Auditors

37. Report of those Charged with Governance (ISA 260) - Staffordshire County Council

On behalf of the Councils External Auditors, Ernst Young, Steve Clark presented their report on their annual audit of the County Council for 2019/20.

Due to COVID 19 the deadline for completion of audits had been extended to 30 November 2020 however, resourcing difficulties meant that a number of tasks relating to the audit of the Pension Fund remained outstanding. For the County Council's accounts whilst yet to be signed off he did not anticipate reporting on any major issues.

Reporting on key areas of risk, Steve Clark highlighted:

- the possible consequences for the Council's accounts of the practice of only valuing a set percentage of its land/buildings annually,
- the importance of timely recording of the disposal of school assets to academies,
- the need to revise financial plans for 2020/21 and the future MTFS to provide for additional/changing demands due to COVID 19.

The auditor's Value for Money assessment identified 2 areas of risk – sustainable resource deployment, and working with partners and third parties. Linked to the latter, the auditor had reviewed the Council's actions in response to the Written Statement of Action for SEND services and due to the position reported as at March 2020 intended to issue a qualified 'except for' conclusion with respect to the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

RESOLVED – That the External Auditors report and opinion for 2019/20 be accepted.

38. Internal Audit Plan 2020/21 - Update

The County Treasurer reported on progress made on the delivery of the Internal Audit Plan 2020/21 explaining that due to the need to provide support for COVID 19 related services there had been changes to the Plan resulting in a net increase in projects, commending his officers on their work during the emergency.

The report summarised the Internal Audit team's activities including tracking/monitoring recommendations of audit reviews.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

39. Forward Plan

The Committee considered the Forward Plan/Work Programme for its future meetings noting that the Plan would be updated to reflect decisions made at this meeting.

40. Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED – that the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below.

The Committee proceeded to consider the following items:

- 41. Exempt minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2020 (exemption paragraph 3)**
- 42. Strategic Risk Register - COVID-19 Response Debrief Report (exemption paragraph 3)**
- 43. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Update (exemption paragraph 3)**
- 44. Third Party Access - Final Audit Report 2020/21 (exemption paragraph 3)**
- 45. Scheme of Delegation - Final Audit Report 2019/20 (exemption paragraph 3)**
- 46. Update on Deer Call Out Services - Implementation of Previous Recommendations (exemption paragraph 3)**
- 47. Bank Mandate Fraud - Final Internal Audit Investigation Report (exemption paragraph 3)**

Chairman

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|-------------------------------|
| Local Members Interest |
| N/A |

Audit and Standards Committee – Tuesday 09 February 2021

Local Government Association – Model Code of Conduct for Members – Proposed Adoption by Staffordshire County Council

Purpose

- a. To seek Members' views on the suitability of Local Government Association's Model Councillors Code of Conduct for adoption by Staffordshire County Council;
- b. If the Code is considered suitable, to recommend to full Council on the adoption of the Model with effect from the date of the next County Council elections, and the consequent amendment of the Constitution.

Report of the Director for Corporate Services (Monitoring Officer)

Background

1. In July 2020, I reported to members on a Draft Model Councillors Code of Conduct being consulted on by the Local Government Association (LGA). Members' comments were submitted to the LGA at that time. The LGA has now published its final version of the Code recommending that Councils consider its adoption. A copy is attached to this report as Appendix 1.
2. The development of the new Code has been carried out in compliance with one of the 26 recommendations in the Committee for Standards in Public Life's (CSPL) report on their Review of Ethical Standards in Local Government. Members may recall that this Council acted early to implement a number of those recommendations without waiting for national action or legislation, having recognised the improvements which could be made immediately to the Council's processes particularly around the handling of complaints against members and the declaration of interests.

Model Code of Conduct

3. The copy of the LGA Model Code shown at Appendix 1 includes in italic/shaded text reference to the comments submitted by this Council during the consultation exercise. These are included to provide a reminder of the detailed discussions held at this Committee and the feedback received when the consultation exercise was shared with all elected members. The level of interest by members demonstrated their wish to see improvements to our overall 'Standards Regime' including our Code of Conduct. Many of the comments submitted are reflected in the final version of the LGA Model Code.
4. Overall, the new Model is an improvement on Staffordshire's existing Code as it applies to the behaviours of members beyond when acting in their official capacity, to now include when they are claiming or giving the impression of acting as a

Councillor or publicly referring to their role of Councillor or using information which only a Councillor would be party to. Additionally, the new Code gives clear concise explanations of each undertaking and the expectations on members. A key feature is that it clearly states that the whole Code applies to member's actions and behaviour on Social Media – an issue which this Council has sought to address. The political group leaders have voiced support for the adoption of the new Model in view of the improvements it offers.

5. Whilst the new Model and the emphasis on openness and transparency is welcomed, members' particular attention is drawn to sections 7 and 8 of Appendix B to the Code – relating to the declaration of (general) pecuniary interests. I have concerns about whether it is reasonable to expect members to always know whether an item would relate to the financial interests or wellbeing of individuals whom he/she may not necessarily be in regular, close contact with. Furthermore, the member would also be required to distinguish whether the matter 'directly relates' or 'affects' the individuals' financial interest or wellbeing. The difficulties which members would experience in identifying links between reports and their family/associates was the gist of the argument which the County Council put forward to the LGA when they originally proposed to widen the scope for declarations of the statutory Disclosable Pecuniary Interests to cover the members family and close associates. It is notable that the LGA have not included this proposal in their final Model Code.
6. Our current Code of Conduct was introduced under the Localism Act 2011 and differs from the Model produced at that time by the LGA. Whilst our Code was therefore most suited to this Council's own preferences, it has caused a degree of confusion for those who serve on both the County and a District or Borough Council as those Councils generally adopted the LGA version. Whilst I advocate omission of the section on (general) pecuniary interests, the adoption of the remainder of the Model Code by Staffordshire County Council would contribute to a more consistent approach across the County, and minimise the risk of confusion amongst dual role members which in turn will lessen the risk of members unintentionally breaching the Code of Conduct.

Implementation date for any new Code

7. The LGA's publication of the new Model Code provides for its introduction to coincide with the County Council elections scheduled for 6 May 2021. The initial requirement placed on new members is to sign the Acceptance of Office which incorporates a commitment to abide by the Council's Code of Conduct. The priority training event for all new members is on the Code of Conduct and the standards of behaviour expected of them. If this Committee and full Council decide to adopt a new Code, my Member and Democratic Services Team will work on its development and implementation in time for the forthcoming elections.

Internal Resolution Procedure and Sanctions

8. The LGA's new Model Code does not go on to refer to the Internal Resolution Procedure or the sanctions which accompany it. In December 2019, stemming from consideration of the CSPL report, as part of the review of this Council's Code of

Conduct, both the Standards/Complaints processes and sanctions were updated. Given that recent review it is suggested that both the process and sanctions be applied to any new Code approved by members. Details can be seen at Appendix 2 to this report.

Legal/Risk Implications

9. This report serves to ensure that Staffordshire County Council has a Code of Conduct for members which supports members in fulfilling the expectations of their constituents whilst demonstrating high standards of behaviour and minimising the risk of legal challenge to themselves and/or the Authority.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

10. The proposals in the report do not generate any additional resource implications for the Authority

Climate Change Implications

11. There are no climate change implications arising as a result of this report.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – LGA Model Code of Conduct for Members

Appendix 2 – Staffordshire County Council Standards/Complaints Procedure and Sanctions

Contact Details

| | |
|------------------------|--|
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Local Government Association

Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020

Joint statement

The role of councillor across all tiers of local government is a vital part of our country's system of democracy. It is important that as councillors we can be held accountable and all adopt the behaviours and responsibilities associated with the role. Our conduct as an individual councillor affects the reputation of all councillors. We want the role of councillor to be one that people aspire to. We also want individuals from a range of backgrounds and circumstances to be putting themselves forward to become councillors.

As councillors, we represent local residents, work to develop better services and deliver local change. The public have high expectations of us and entrust us to represent our local area; taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. We have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.

Importantly, we should be able to undertake our role as a councillor without being intimidated, abused, bullied or threatened by anyone, including the general public.

This Code has been designed to protect our democratic role, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public's trust in local government

Introduction

The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed this Model Councillor Code of Conduct, in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance. It is a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments.

All councils are required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

The LGA will undertake an annual review of this Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation. The LGA can also offer support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the county associations of local councils can offer advice and support to town and parish councils.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a "councillor" means a member or co-opted member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A "co-opted member" is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as "a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “local authority” includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

General principles of councillor conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority’s requirements and in the public interest.

Application of the Code of Conduct

acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when:

- you are acting in your capacity as a councillor and/or as a representative of your council
- you are claiming to act as a councillor and/or as a representative of your council
- you are giving the impression that you are acting as a councillor and/or as a representative of your council
- you refer publicly to your role as a councillor or use knowledge you could only obtain in your role as a councillor.*

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.**

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and Parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

***SCC comment at consultation stage: Re Scope of Code:** *SCC supports, to a great extent, the proposal that councillors demonstrate the behaviours set out in the Code when they are publicly acting as, identifying as, and/or giving the impression that they are acting as a councillor, including when representing their council on official business and when using social media?*

****SCC comments at consultation stage:** *The draft Code did not make sufficient reference to the use of social media and therefore fails to address the issue facing most Councils regarding the 'control' of Members' use of Social Media. Reference is limited and under the Civility heading is restricted to the action which a member might take against offensive 'posts' but doesn't refer to the control of their own use of Social Media. In response to last year's CSPL Report on Ethical Standards, Staffordshire added the following to its' Code of Conduct which might serve as a start point for the addition of a section on Use of Social Media in the LGA draft Code:*

'Ensuring that my use of social media is at all times respectful to the audience (both intended and co-incidental) and does not portray the actions or views of either the County Council or me as a member of that Council as offensive, discriminatory, abusive, inflammatory or defamatory. Furthermore, for anything that I publish on social media I will endeavour to remain mindful of the fact that the general public is likely to interpret that material as a reflection of

my views as an elected member rather than a private individual.'

Standards of councillor conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a councillor:

1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor-officer protocol.

*** SCC comment at consultation stage:** *(In response to the original proposal to refer to treating Councillors and members of the public with Civility) We do not support the adoption of the word 'Civility' as we consider it to be less clearly understood/defined amongst the public than the concept of 'Respect' that it is intended to replace. It is quite possible to be offensive during a 'civil' conversation.*

Equally it is perhaps easier to bring a vexatious complaint about a lack of civility than one about respect.

Alternative suggested wording: Treating people, including fellow Councillors, officers, organisations and members of the public, respectfully, fairly and impartially in a manner which I would expect and wish to be treated myself. (One of our Members advocates the use of the term 'Common Sense' (noun – good sense and sound judgement in practical matters) as part of a phrase such as 'behaving as Common Sense Dictates' or 'by Using Common Sense At All Times.'

This term covers the individuals total responsibility at all times wherever they are and whatever they may be doing or saying

2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

As a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person.

2.2 I do not harass any person.

2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

*** SCC comment at consultation stage** (In response to the ACAS definition of bullying and harassment) The notes to the Draft Code show that the definition is that of ACAS. However, we would query the wide scope of the definition – for example - a complaint from an individual about an e mail that they'd found offensive would be regarded as bullying. How would we determine where the fine line between Respect (Civility) and Bullying had been crossed?

3. Impartiality of officers of the council

As a councillor:

3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them

to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. Confidentiality and access to information

As a councillor:

4.1 I do not disclose information:

- a. given to me in confidence by anyone**
- b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**
 - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;**
 - ii. I am required by law to do so;**
 - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
 - iv. the disclosure is:**
 - 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and**
 - 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and**
 - 3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.**

4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As a councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.

As a councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in your or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.*

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes

undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

***SCC comment at consultation stage:** *Holding the view that the phrase 'bringing the council into disrepute' is not sufficiently clear, we would support its amendment to read : Behaviour that is considered dishonest, deceitful or derogatory.....*

6. Use of position

As a councillor:

6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of local authority resources and facilities

As a councillor:

7.1 I do not misuse council resources.

7.2 I will, when using the resources of the local or authorising their use by others:

- a. act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and**
- b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

8. *Complying with the Code of Conduct*

As a councillor:

8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.

8.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.

8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.

8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority

9. *Interests*

As a councillor:

9.1 I register and declare my interests.

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should declare an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be declared by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or declare a disclosable pecuniary (i.e. financial) interest is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and declaring interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

10. Gifts and hospitality

As a councillor:

10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.*

10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**

10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

***SCC comment at consultation stage:** *The reference to 'may apply to the council for any permission etc....'leaves the member open to challenge if they accept a gift or hospitality without knowing an individual's future intention to apply for a permission etc. As alternative text we would suggest Not accepting significant gifts or hospitality from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the council, or persons that the member might reasonably expect to apply for permission or a licence or other significant advantage.*

**** SCC comment at consultation stage:** *(in response to the original proposal that the threshold be £25) SCC supports a threshold of £50 The current £25 threshold deters members from accepting hospitality from local organisations thus hindering their involvement in community initiatives. The threshold should be a matter for local determination but there should be a requirement to take into account thresholds applied for other public sector positions eg Magistrates*

Appendices

Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Appendix B

Registering interests

1. Within 28 days of this Code of Conduct being adopted by the local authority or your election or appointment to office (where that is later) you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) and Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests). Disclosable Pecuniary Interests means issues relating to money and finances.
2. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
3. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor/member or co-opted member, or a person connected with the member or co-opted member, being subject to violence or intimidation.
4. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Declaring interests

5. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, you must declare the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to declare the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest.
6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Other Registerable Interests, you must declare the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', again you do not have to declare the nature of the interest.
7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which *directly relates* to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room

unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to declare the nature of the interest.*

8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which *affects* –
 - a. your own financial interest or well-being;
 - b. a financial interest or well-being of a friend, relative, close associate; or
 - c. a body included in those you need to declare under Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

you must disclose the interest.*

9. Where the matter affects the financial interest or well-being:
 - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
 - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

you must declare the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to declare the nature of the interest

*** SCC comment at consultation stage:**(In response to the proposed widening of the scope of the requirement to declare interests to include friend/relative/close associate) Members are required to declare the interests of their Partner where they are aware of those interests. The widening of this requirement to family members and associates would be unenforceable as the Member cannot be reasonably expected to be aware of the detailed personal financial/land/business interests of wider family and associates.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

| Subject | Description |
|--|---|
| Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation | Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.] |
| Sponsorship | Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. |

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Contracts | Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the |
| | councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council — (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged. |
| Land and Property | Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income. |
| Licences | Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer |
| Corporate tenancies | Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of. |
| Securities | Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were |

| | |
|--|---|
| | spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class. |
|--|---|

* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registerable Interests

| | |
|---|---|
| Any Body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by the council; | |
| Any Body - | (a) exercising functions of a public nature; |
| | (b) directed to charitable purposes; or |
| | (c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) |
| of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management. | |

Appendix C – the Committee on Standards in Public Life

The LGA has undertaken this review whilst the Government continues to consider the recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in their report on [Local Government Ethical Standards](#). If the Government chooses to implement any of the recommendations, this could require a change to this Code.

The recommendations cover:

- Recommendations for changes to the Localism Act 2011 to clarify in law when the Code of Conduct applies
- The introduction of sanctions
- An appeals process through the Local Government Ombudsman
- Changes to the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012
- Updates to the Local Government Transparency Code
- Changes to the role and responsibilities of the Independent Person
- That the criminal offences in the Localism Act 2011 relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests should be abolished

The Local Government Ethical Standards report also includes Best Practice recommendations. These are:

Best practice 1: Local authorities should include prohibitions on bullying and harassment in codes of conduct. These should include a definition of bullying and harassment, supplemented with a list of examples of the sort of behaviour covered by such a definition.

Best practice 2: Councils should include provisions in their code of conduct requiring councillors to comply with any formal standards investigation and prohibiting trivial or malicious allegations by councillors.

Best practice 3: Principal authorities should review their code of conduct each year and regularly seek, where possible, the views of the public, community organisations and neighbouring authorities.

Best practice 4: An authority's code should be readily accessible to both councillors and the public, in a prominent position on a council's website and available in council premises.

Best practice 5: Local authorities should update their gifts and hospitality register at least once per quarter, and publish it in an accessible format, such as CSV.

Best practice 6: Councils should publish a clear and straightforward public interest test against which allegations are filtered.

Best practice 7: Local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.

Best practice 8: An Independent Person should be consulted as to whether to undertake a formal investigation on an allegation, and should be given the option to

review and comment on allegations which the responsible officer is minded to dismiss as being without merit, vexatious, or trivial.

Best practice 9: Where a local authority makes a decision on an allegation of misconduct following a formal investigation, a decision notice should be published as soon as possible on its website, including a brief statement of facts, the provisions of the code engaged by the allegations, the view of the Independent Person, the reasoning of the decision-maker, and any sanction applied.

Best practice 10: A local authority should have straightforward and accessible guidance on its website on how to make a complaint under the code of conduct, the process for handling complaints, and estimated timescales for investigations and outcomes.

Best practice 11: Formal standards complaints about the conduct of a parish councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the parish council as a whole, rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances.

Best practice 12: Monitoring Officers' roles should include providing advice, support and management of investigations and adjudications on alleged breaches to parish councils within the remit of the principal authority. They should be provided with adequate training, corporate support and resources to undertake this work.

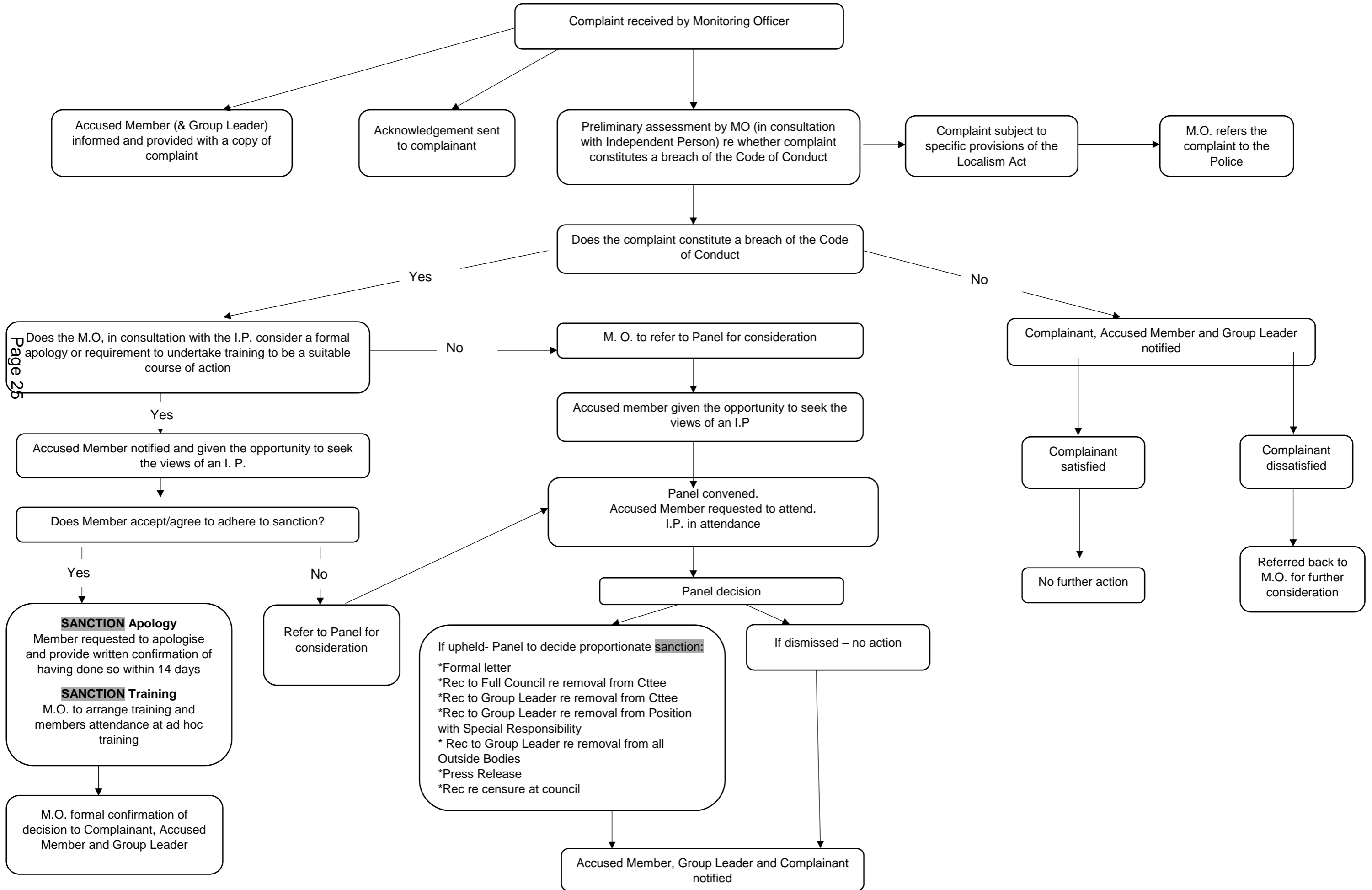
Best practice 13: A local authority should have procedures in place to address any conflicts of interest when undertaking a standards investigation. Possible steps should include asking the Monitoring Officer from a different authority to undertake the investigation.

Best practice 14: Councils should report on separate bodies they have set up or which they own as part of their annual governance statement and give a full picture of their relationship with those bodies. Separate bodies created by local authorities should abide by the Nolan principle of openness and publish their board agendas and minutes and annual reports in an accessible place.

Best practice 15: Senior officers should meet regularly with political group leaders or group whips to discuss standards issues.

The LGA has committed to reviewing the Code on an annual basis to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

Decision Making Procedure under Local Code of Conduct (Approved 19/12/19)





Audit and Standards Committee

Forward Plan 2020/21

If you would like to know more about our work programme, please get in touch with Lisa Andrews, Head of Audit & Financial Services, 01785 276402 or lisa.andrews@staffordshire.gov.uk

| Item and Lead Officer | Date of Meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|--|---|---|--------|----------------|
| 30 April 2020 - CANCELLED | | | | |
| Strategic Risk Register - Update Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | Deferred to December 2020 | | | |
| Annual Report on Information Governance Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Tracy Thorley | Deferred to 12 th October 2020 | | | |
| Annual Report of the work of the Audit & Standards Committee Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | Deferred to April 2021 | | | |
| Internal Audit Charter 2020/21 Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | Deferred to 30 th July 2020 | | | |
| Internal Audit Plan 2020/21 Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | Circulated remotely for approval | | | |
| Development of an assurance framework Report of County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | Deferred to February 2021 | | | |

| Item and Lead Officer | Date of Meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|---|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| External Audit Plan 2019/20 Report of Ernst & Young | To be confirmed | | | |
| Staffordshire Pension Fund Audit Planning Report 2019/20 Report of Ernst & Young | To be confirmed | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution As required | As required | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | All meetings | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (Part 2 items) | As required | | | Part 2 items - Exemption paragraph 3. |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Cyber Essentials Update: Tracy Thorley/Natalie Morrissey | To be confirmed | | Regular Update to members on Multi agency exercise in November 2019 | |
| 22 June 2020 - CANCELLED | | | | |
| Code of Corporate Governance – Update Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews Head of Audit and Financial Services | Deferred to 30 th July 2020 | | | |
| Internal Audit Outturn Report 2019/20 Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | Deferred to 30 th July 2020 | | | |
| Report of the Standards Panel. Report of the Director of Corporate Services. Lead Officer: Ann-Marie Davidson | To be confirmed | | | |
| Local Government Audit Committee Briefing – update report of Ernst & Young | Deferred to 12 th October | | | |

| Item and Lead Officer | Date of Meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|---|---|---|--------|----------------|
| | 2020 | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution As required | As required | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit & Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews, Head of Audit & Financial Services | Deferred to 30 th July 2020 | | | |
| PART TWO Exempt – Internal Audit Special Investigations/Reports of Limited Assurance/Top Ten Risk Areas | Deferred to 30 th July 2020 | | | |
| PART TWO Exempt Update on Property Governance – Implementation of previous recommendations. | Deferred to 12 th October 2020 | | | |
| PART TWO Exempt Update on Deer Call Out Services – Implementation of previous recommendations. | Deferred to 12 th October 2020 | | | |
| PART TWO Exempt Update on Approved Mental Health Professionals – Implementation of previous recommendations. | Deferred to 12 th October 2020 | | | |
| 30 July 2020 | | | | |
| National Code of Conduct for Elected Members. Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Julie Plant | | | | |
| Internal Audit Charter 2020/21 Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee | | | | |

| Item and Lead Officer | Date of Meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|--|--------------------------------|---|--------|----------------|
| Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| Code of Corporate Governance – Update Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews Head of Audit and Financial Services | | | | |
| Fraud Risks – The Impact of COVID 19 Presentation by Lisa Andrews & Debbie Harris | | | | |
| Internal Audit Outturn Report 2019/20 Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | | | | |
| Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | Deferred to 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Training on Statement of Accounts | Deferred to 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Statement of Accounts 2019-20 Presentation and Report of County Treasurer Lead Officer: Rachel Spain | Deferred to 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Report to those charged with Governance (ISA 260) a) Staffordshire County Council Report of Ernst & Young | Deferred to 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Report to those charged with Governance (ISA 260) b) Staffordshire Pension Fund Report of Ernst & Young | Deferred to 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Local Government Audit Committee Briefing – update report of Ernst & Young | Deferred to 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution As required | As required | | | |

| Item and Lead Officer | Date of Meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|--|-----------------------|---|--------|----------------|
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (<i>Part 2 items</i>). | As required | | | |
| 12 October 2020 | | | | |
| Annual Report on Information Governance Report of Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Tracy Thorley, Head of Business Support & Compliance & Natalie Morrissey, Information Governance Manager | Moved from April 2020 | | | |
| Code of Conduct for Members - Report on the Management of Complaints Report of Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Julie Plant | | | | |
| Member's Family Policy Report of Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Chris Ebberley | | | | |
| National Fraud Initiative (2020) Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | | | | |
| Final Accounts 2019/20 Progress Report – verbal report of Ernst & Young | Moved from July 2020 | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution As required | As required | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (<i>Part 2 items</i>). | As required | | | |
| PART TWO Exempt | Moved from | | | |

| Item and Lead Officer | Date of Meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|--|----------------------------|---|--------|----------------|
| Update on Property Governance – Implementation of previous recommendations. | July 2020 | | | |
| PART TWO Exempt Update on Approved Mental Health Professionals – Implementation of previous recommendations. | Moved from July 2020 | | | |
| 8 December 2020 (2pm start) | | | | |
| Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | Moved from 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Training on Statement of Accounts | Moved from 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Statement of Accounts 2019-20 Presentation and Report of County Treasurer Lead Officer: Rachel Spain | Moved from 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Report to those charged with Governance (ISA 260) a) Staffordshire County Council Report of Ernst & Young | Moved from 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Report to those charged with Governance (ISA 260) b) Staffordshire Pension Fund Report of Ernst & Young | Moved from 12 October 2020 | | | |
| Strategic Risk Register – Update Review of COVID 19 Incident Management Team – lessons learnt exercise. Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews/ Katie Weston | | | | |
| Internal Audit Plan 2020/21 – Update Report of the County Treasurer | | | | |

| Item and Lead Officer | Date of Meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------|----------------|
| Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution | As required | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer – Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports <i>(Part 2 items)</i> . | As required | | | |
| PART TWO Exempt Update on SEND WSOA and Implementation of previous audit recommendations (including the work of Family Improvement Boards. Report of Assistant Director for Education Strategy and Improvement (to include as appropriate Cabinet Member for Education and SEND and Chairmen of Family Improvement Boards | | | | |
| PART TWO Exempt Update on Deer Call Out Services – Implementation of previous recommendations | Moved from July 2020 | | | |
| 9 February 2021 | | | | |
| Overview of the Strategic Risks present within the Care Director System. Lead Officer: Richard Harling | | | | |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing Performance Annual Report Report of Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Becky Lee | Moved from December 2020 | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution | As required | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee | | | | |

| Item and Lead Officer | Date of Meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------|----------------|
| Lead Officer – Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports <i>(Part 2 items)</i> | As required | | | |
| Third Party Access – progress report Lead Officer: Natalie Morrissey | | | | |
| Local Government Association – Model Code of Conduct for Members – Proposed Adoption by Staffordshire County Council Lead Officer: Julie Plant | | | | |
| 12 April 2021 | | | | |
| External Audit Plan 2020/21 Report of Ernst & Young | Moved from February 2021 | | | |
| Staffordshire Pension Fund Audit Plan 2020/21 Report of Ernst & Young | Moved from February 2021 | | | |
| Annual Report of the work of the Audit & Standards Committee Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| Internal Audit Charter 2021/22 Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| Development of an assurance framework Report of County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | Moved from April 2020 | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution | As required | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |

| Item and Lead Officer | Date of Meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|--|-----------------|---|--------|----------------|
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports <i>(Part 2 items)</i> . | As required | | | |
| Special Guardianship Payments Arrangements – progress report Lead Officer – Deborah Ramsdale | | | | |
| Review of Joint Funding & Billing CCG's Continuing Healthcare - Progress Report Lead Officer – Karen Webb | | | | |
| Review of the arrangements in place to address the risks of Cyber Attack. Lead Officer – Natalie Morrisey | | | | |

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|---|---|
| <p>Membership</p> <p>Derek Davis, OBE Philip Atkins, OBE Alastair Little David Brookes Martyn Tittley (Chair) Helen Fisher Ann Edgeller Keith Flunder Paul Northcott Keith James Richard Ford Carolyn Trowbridge (Vice Chair) Ross Ward Bernard Williams Sue Woodward</p> | <p>Calendar of Future Committee Meetings (All meetings at 10.00 a.m. unless otherwise stated)</p> <p>20 April 2020 22 June 2020 30 July 2020 12 October 2020 8 December 2020 ****14:00 9 February 2021 12 April 2021</p> <p>Meetings usually take place at County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford ST16 2LH</p> |
|---|---|

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