

**Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee**

**6 March 2020**

<b>Subject:</b>	LGA Member Code of Conduct Review
<b>Director:</b>	Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer - Surjit Tour
<b>Contribution towards Vision 2030:</b>	
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Elaine Newsome – Service Manager Democracy

**DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That:**

1. The Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer is given delegated authority, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, to work with the Local Government Association on the update of the model Code of Conduct.
2. That the draft model Code of Conduct is submitted to a future meeting of the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee.

**1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the national development of a revised model Code of Conduct, which will have implications for the Council's wider review of its governance arrangements.

**2 IMPLICATIONS FOR VISION 2030**

- 2.1 Good Governance supports the Council in delivering against all aspects of Vision 2030.

### **3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

3.1 The Local Government Peer Challenge in 2018 and 2019 endorsed the Council's proposed holistic review of its governance arrangements. The Council's constitution as the guiding governance document was included in the review. The Code of Conduct for elected members is included at Part 5 of the constitution and outlines the expectations placed on Members and Co-opted members of the authority. It was last reviewed in 2016.

3.2 In January 2019 the Committee for Standards in Public Life published their findings and recommendations which included:

“The Local Government Association should create an updated model code of conduct, in consultation with representative bodies of Councillors and officers of all tiers of local government.”

The Local Government Association (LGA) commenced work on revising the model code in September 2019 with an anticipated introduction of the new code at the LGA conference on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020. This is part of a broader programme of work around civility in public life which aims to address concerns about intimidation of those holding public office and the standards of public and political debate.

### **4 THE CURRENT POSITION**

4.1 Nationally, Elected Members and Officers have been involved in initial discussions on the content of the code. The Council's Monitoring Officer has been invited by the LGA to participate in progressing this element of the LGA's programme.

4.2 The outcome of the national review will influence the Council's own review of its governance arrangements.

4.3 Any revised LGA Code of Conduct would require approval by Full Council. Before any recommendation is made, Members will be consulted on the revised LGA Code of Conduct.

### **5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)**

5.1 Any proposed changes to the model code will be subject to a consultation period which commences in mid-March 2020.

## **6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 6.1 The Council could opt not to be involved in the LGA programme. This would be a missed opportunity to affect a key national initiative.

## **7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 None directly associated with this report.

## **8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by its elected members. The Code of Conduct sets out the expectations placed on members.

## **9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 9.1 None associated with this report.

## **10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1 None associated with this report.

## **11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 11.1 None associated with this report.

## **12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS**

- 12.1 The Council has a responsibility to ensure that the Monitoring Officer is appropriately resourced in order to that they are able to carry out their statutory functions.

## **13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)**

- 13.1 None associated with this report.

## **14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND**

- 14.1 None associated with this report.

**15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

15.1 The LGA review of the model code will influence the direction of the Council's review of its governance arrangements. It is appropriate and timely for the Council's Monitoring Officer to contribute to the development of the revised model and that the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee should continue to lead on developments relating to the conduct of elected members.

**16 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 None associated with this report.

**17 APPENDICES:**

None

**Surjit Tour**  
**Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer**