



**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
STANDARDS COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2021**

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West
Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors R Walker (Chairman), K Beardsall, B Gray, R Mallender, D Mason,
and A Phillips

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

K White and A Wood

Independent Persons: J Baggaley, H Richardson and C Richards

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

S Sull

Service Manager - Legal Services

T Coop

Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

S Nelken

8 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest reported.

9 Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 February 2021

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2021 were approved as a true
record and signed by the Chairman.

10 Cases and Work Update

The Monitoring Officer presented a report updating the Committee on the
complaints received since the last meeting of the Standards Committee in
February 2021. It was noted that 3 Code of Conduct complaints had been
received, one complaint had been withdrawn by the complainant, the other two
had not been accepted under the Code.

The Monitoring Officer advised where complaints were not accepted under the
Code, the details had not been included as to do so would be misleading, and
could be seen to misrepresent the nature of complaints received. In both cases
the Independent Person had been consulted.

Members were advised that the Member Development Group continues to
develop the Councillors training programme and that the Monitoring Officer is
available to support this Group. The Committee were reminded that a second
Motion training session is scheduled for 18 November.

In accordance with the Best Practice Principals adopted by Council, the

Monitoring Officer introduced two new independent persons, Helen Richardson and Christopher Richards who have been appointed to the position for a fixed two year period. The current independent person John Baggaley will continue in his role for a period of 12 months from September 2021 to support the transition.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee note and approve the report

11 **Standards in Public Life Report and LGA Model Code of Conduct**

The Monitoring Officer presented a report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) and the Local Government Association (LGA) Model Code of Conduct developed following a consultation exercise undertaken in 2020.

The report updated Committee Members following the change to the membership of the Standards Committee in May 2021 and reminds members of their responsibility as a committee to ensure high standards of conduct are maintained.

The Monitoring Officer provided the Committee with background information in respect of the CSPL Best Practice recommendations and confirmed that the Council had adopted the 15 Best Practice principles in July 2019.

In respect of the LGA Code of Conduct the Monitoring Officer invited the Committee to consider the Model LGA Code and in particular, whether the Council's Code of Conduct should be amended to incorporate all or part of it. In considering the Model Code the Committee are invited to consider whether the LGA Model Code will enhance the Council's Code of Conduct and that any amendments to it are appropriate. The Monitoring Officer recommended that the review be undertaken by an informal cross party working group, reporting to Governance Scrutiny Group, and any amendments to the Code be referred to full Council for consideration and adoption.

Ms White – Independent Member asked a specific question in relation to the roles across County, Borough and Parishes and asked how we propose to engage with them.

Councillor Gray suggested that as this is a relatively new document could we consider what other authorities who maybe further ahead were doing to assist with any amendments we may wish to consider.

The Monitoring Officer explained that we could seek to look at what other authorities were considering and advised that there are some good comparisons and useful information to share. The Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that Nottinghamshire County Council had already made some considerable changes. In addition, the Monitoring Officer advised that the consultation would provide an opportunity to discuss with those Councillors with County, Borough and Parish membership at Governance Scrutiny Group and Council.

Mr Wood – Parish Councillor Member raised his concerns regarding bullying and how this was not adequately covered within the current Code, adding that there can be no change unless there are changes to Government legislation.

The Monitoring Officer explained that the Borough enhanced its Code recently in respect of bullying and suggested Parish Council's keep things under review also, adding the Model Code is universal across and can be adapted across County, Borough and Parishes. The Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that a Town and Parish Forum is scheduled for November 2021 and that Town and Parish Council's be invited to have their say and feed into the review.

Members asked specific questions relating to the Working Group; who or how many members would be required; timescale of the programme and in what format would the group meet, they also expressed that the working group would provide a good opportunity for members to dissect the documents and learn from the experience. The Monitoring Officer suggested all or some of the Committee Members, meeting informally over 3 sessions between November 2021 and January 2022, adding that Hybrid meetings would be considered if some members were not able to meet face to face.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) The Committee note the progress of the implementation of the CSPL Best Practice recommendations by Government;
- b) establish a working group to consider the LGA Model Code of Conduct and make recommendations to the Committee.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

CHAIRMAN