



Standards Committee

Monday, 21 February 2022

Code of Conduct

Report of the Monitoring Officer

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. A report on the Local Government Association (LGA) Model Code of Conduct was presented to the Standards Committee on 4 October 2021. The Committee was advised that the draft Model Code was developed by the LGA following a consultation exercise undertaken in 2020.
- 1.2. Following consideration of the report, and Model Code of Conduct, the Committee resolved to establish a working group to consider the LGA Code and make recommendations to the Committee in respect of it.

2. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Standards Committee:

- a) notes the amendments, made by the group, to the LGA Model Code of Conduct; and
- b) refers the revised Rushcliffe Code of Conduct to the Governance Scrutiny group for comment and, thereafter, to Council for adoption.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

The Standards Committee is the responsible committee for ensuring high standards of conduct are maintained. The LGA Model Code of Conduct has been drafted in response to the CSPL report and to support high standards of conduct. The Model Code has been subject to extensive stakeholder consultation and was released by the LGA on 23 December 2020, with the aim “to protect our democratic role, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public’s trust in local government”.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. The working group has met on four occasions to discuss:
 - i) The LGA Model Code of Conduct.
 - ii) The guidance published by the LGA to support the Model Code.
 - iii) The Council’s arrangements which set out the process for dealing with complaints about Councillor Conduct locally.
 - iv) The Councillor Register of Interests form.

- 4.2. The group considered the aforementioned documents in detail and determined that the Model Code of Conduct should be considered as the starting point for the review of the Council's Code of Conduct.
- 4.3. Having considered the Model Code, the group proposed amendments to tailor it to local requirements. The group has recommended adoption of the Model Code subject to those proposed amendments and the amended Code is presented to the Standards Committee at **Appendix A**; and for ease of reference the proposed amendments are highlighted in red text.
- 4.4. Following consideration of the Code, the group went on to consider the supporting guidance. The group recommended that the guidance be published alongside the Code to support overall understanding. The group were mindful; however, that the detail contained within the guidance has resulted in a lengthy document. It is proposed, therefore, that hyperlinks be introduced into the Code to link to the relevant sections of the guidance. The guidance is appended at **Appendix B**.
- 4.5. The group also considered the procedure for dealing with complaints (the arrangements) which the Council has been required to have in place following their introduction by the Localism Act 2011. Having considered the arrangements, the group has recommended some amendments to them (**Appendix C**). For ease of reference, the proposed amendments are highlighted in red text. The LGA has also produced guidance on complaint handling. The group recommended that the guidance be published alongside the arrangements to support customer understanding of the process (**Appendix D**).
- 4.6. Following consideration of the core documents, the Code, guidance and arrangements, the group went onto consider the Councillor Register of Interests form. The view of the group was that the current form lacked detail and clarity for members in completing. It is proposed therefore that the Register of Interests form be updated to the form attached at **Appendix E**. The form will be supported by guidance which is attached at **Appendix F**.
- 4.7. To further develop the complaints process, the group was minded to also review the complaint form. It is proposed that the form be reviewed at the next meeting of the Standards Committee.
- 4.8. It is recommended that the amendments to the Code of Conduct be referred to the Governance Scrutiny group for comment and, thereafter, to Council for adoption.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

None identified.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications.

6.2. Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

6.3. Equalities Implications

There are no specific equalities implications.

6.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no Section 17 Implications.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	Delivery of an effective Standards regime supports the Council's Quality of Life priority
Efficient Services	
Sustainable Growth	
The Environment	

8. Recommendation

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For more information contact:	Sanjit Sull - Monitoring Officer ssull@rushcliffe.gov.uk 0115 9148215
Background papers Available for Inspection	None
List of appendices (if any):	Appendix A – Revised Code of Conduct Appendix B – Guidance Appendix C – Arrangements Appendix D – Complaint handling guidance Appendix E – Register of Interests form Appendix F – Guidance Notes