



ADVICE GUIDANCE AND TRAINING ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Report to	Standards Committee
Ward(s):	All
Key Decision:	No
Appendices	None
Papers relied on:	None Identified

That the Standards Committee:

- **notes its role in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members by providing advice, guidance and training on the code of conduct**
- **agrees to conduct an on line survey of members to seek views on the content and delivery of standards and ethics training**
- **agrees the proposed new approach set out in the Report to provide advice guidance and training for councillors on the requirements of the Code of Conduct**

Background, corporate objectives and priorities

This Report accords with the Council's Constitution and sets out the role of the Standards Committee in promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members.

Main considerations

1 Executive Summary

1.1 The Committee is required by the Constitution to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members and to provide advice, guidance and training on the code of conduct.

2 The Proposal

2.1 The Council comprise 60 elected councillors. Each year a third of these positions are up for election. This occurs for three consecutive years with arrest period on the fourth year. However following the recent boundary review there will be all out elections in 2019/20 followed by elections by thirds as before.

2.2 The Council provide a comprehensive induction session following the elections each May. This includes an overview of the statutory responsibilities for members including the Code of Conduct, Data protection, Equalities and Diversity and Health and Safety.

2.3 More detailed sessions to improve members' knowledge base, key priorities of the Council and workshops to support skill development are arranged throughout the remainder of the year. The session devoted to the Code of Conduct takes place as part of this programme. Members could be asked to identify how the session could be improved, whether it could be developed as an on line course and what topics they would like to see covered.

2.4 It is proposed to recommend to Council that attendance at this annual session on Standards and Ethics or completion of it on line become a mandatory session to ensure high standards of conduct at the Council.

2.5 The session needs to be both an introductory session for new councillors and also a refresher for continuing councillors. Subject to Members' views, it is proposed that it needs to cover:

- The differing role of members and officers
- The Code of Conduct
- Member Complaints process
- Member/Officer Relations (need proper title from constitution)
- Gifts and Hospitality
- Confidentiality and Data protection
- Use of Social media
- Registration of Interest
- Declaration of Interest
- Lobbying

- Quasi-Judicial and Regulatory Applications
- Learning points from recent complaints
- Where to find guidance and assistance

3 Other issues for consideration

The Committee need to consider if they wish to have more of a profile in relation to these matters. It might be that the Chair of the Committee attend the training session on the Code to introduce the committee and its work

Corporate implications

- 1 Legal Implications:** None Identified
- 2 Financial implications:** None Identified
- 3 Risk management –** Not Applicable
- 4 Equalities implications -** None Identified
- 5 Consultation and communication –** Not Applicable
- 6 HR implications-** None Identified

Conclusion

- 7** The Committee's views are requested in relation to this proposal.

<p style="text-align: center;">Date: 12 February 2018 Decision taken by Standards Committee</p>

Lead officer	Bhupinder Gill, Head of Law and Governance
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Status	Final
Confidentiality	It is considered that information contained within this report (and appendices) do not contain exempt information under the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and therefore can be made public.