

THE LOCALISM ACT 2011 – THE AMENDED STANDARDS REGIME - THE NEW CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Submitted by: Head of Central Services and Monitoring Officer

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To inform the Members of the Committee of the Code of Conduct and arrangements for dealing with complaints.

Recommendations

- (a) That the Code of Conduct for Members and Arrangements for dealing with complaints be received.
- (b) That the Committee gives its views on training.

Reasons

To promote and maintain high standards of conduct and to comply with the Localism Act 2011.

Background

1. **The Localism Act 2011**

The Localism Act 2011 makes fundamental changes to the system of regulation of standards of conduct for elected and co-opted Members.

2. **Duty to Promote and Maintain High Standards of Conduct**

The Council will remain under a statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct for its elected and co-opted Members. District councils will continue to have responsibility for dealing with standards complaints against elected and appointed Members of town and parish councils.

3. **Code of Conduct**

At its meeting in July, the Council adopted a new Code of Conduct governing the conduct of elected and co-opted Members when acting in that capacity. The Code can of course be reviewed at any time. The Code is set out at Appendix A.

4. **Dealing with Misconduct Complaints**

4.1 **'Arrangements'**

The Council also adopted 'arrangements' for dealing with complaints of alleged breach of Code of Conduct both by district and parish council Members, and such complaints can only be dealt with in accordance with such arrangements. The arrangements set out in some detail the process for dealing with complaints of misconduct and the actions which may be taken against a Member found to have failed to comply with the relevant Code of Conduct. The Council's arrangements are attached at Appendix B. These were drawn up in

accordance with what was agreed by Standards Committee in March of this year, having taken note of the views of the Local Government Association, the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors (ACSeS), leading practitioners and guidance.

5. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

The new regime will contribute to the overall ethical wellbeing of the Council, and help to ensure a culture of high ethical standards, which the public and the Council's partners can have confidence in. This will thereby contribute to the Council's priority of transforming our Council to achieve excellence.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

The Council will remain under a statutory duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct for its elected and co-opted Members and to provide the Monitoring Officer with such staff, accommodation and such other resources as are in his opinion sufficient to allow him to perform the duties of the post.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

No differential equality impact issues have been identified.

8. **Major Risks**

There are no specific risk issues.

9. **Financial Implications**

There are none flowing from this report.

10. **List of Appendices**

Appendix A – the Code of Conduct for Members

Appendix B – the Arrangements for dealing with Standards allegations under the Localism Act 2011.