



REPORT OF:	The Monitoring Officer
TO:	Standards Committee
ON:	28 September 2022

SUBJECT: Members Code of Conduct - Review

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To consider the new Council values and behaviours and review the Members Code of Conduct.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to consider and review the Members Code of Conduct and recommend any amendments to full Council approval.

3. BACKGROUND

Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 (“the Act”) requires relevant authorities to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority. To assist, it must adopt a Code of Conduct for Members that is consistent with the Nolan principles of *selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership*. The Code must also cover provisions to regulate “disclosable pecuniary interests” and “other interests” which non-disclosable pecuniary interests. The Council adopted a new Code at its meeting on 30 August 2012 and since then there have been minor amendments approved following recommendations by the Standards Committee. The Committee also considered the LGA draft Model Code of Conduct 2020 at its meeting on 20 July 2020 ([Consultation on Draft Model Code of Conduct final.pdf \(blackburn.gov.uk\)](#)) and the recommendations made in the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on local government ethical standards, in January 2021 ([Local Government Ethical Standards Report.pdf \(blackburn.gov.uk\)](#)). The Committee resolved to not to adopt LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 but to update the local Code of Conduct, and update the local Arrangements for dealing with Complaints about the Code of Conduct for Members reflecting the Committee on Standards in Public Life best practice recommendations. The current Members Code of Conduct is contained in the **Appendix**.

The Standard’s Committee’s role and function as delegated by the Council is contained in the constitution. It includes assisting councillors and co-opted members to observe the Code of Conduct. The Committee also has a function to monitor the operation of the Council’s standards arrangements and make appropriate recommendations to the Council as it considers appropriate with respect to the maintenance and review of the Code, together with such other codes, procedure, protocol or guidance as the committee considers appropriate.

The Council has recently developed its organisational values: *Trust, Respect, Ambition, Collaboration, Kindness*. Work is currently being undertaken to cascade and embed these values across the organisation, and the review of the Code could also include adding these values to the General Principles (also known as the Nolan principles) that underpins the obligations under the Code. A special Member Training session has been arranged on 12 October 2022 that will present the Council's organisational values and behaviours, and how it underpins the Code and relates to the Standards arrangements adopted by the Council.

4. RATIONALE

As outlined in the report, the Standards Committee has a role to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members, and to assist councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members Code of Conduct. It also has the role to maintain and review a Code of Conduct for Members of the Council. The Council has developed its organisational values, which should be linked in the review of the Members Code of Conduct.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The legal framework in relation to the Members Code of Conduct is referred to in this report. The current Council Code of Conduct and complaint processes was adopted in line with the Council's obligations under section 27 (2) of the Localism Act 2011 and complies with the requirements under section 28 of the Act. Any recommendations for revisions to the current Code of Conduct would be subject to approval by full Council.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

A governance framework in local authorities is necessary to promote and maintain high ethical standards, and to ensure public confidence.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

8. CONSULTATIONS

The Standards Committee regularly discusses the Council's arrangements for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct, It has previously considered the LGA Model Code and the recommendations contained in the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on local government ethical standards, and recommended changes to the Code. A Member Training session on 'New Values & Behaviours' has been arranged on 12 October 2022, which will further inform the review of the Code.

Chief Officer/Member

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Date: 15th September 2022

Background Papers: None