

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 28 September 2022

PRESENT – Councillors, Parwaiz Akhtar (Chair), Ali, Casey, Connor, Desai, Salton, N Slater, and Whittingham .

ALSO PRESENT - Alan Eastwood, Paul Fletcher and Daniel Wilde

OFFICERS – Asad Laher, Corinne McMillian, Fiona Eastwood, Shannon Gardiner

RESOLUTIONS

1 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Samim Desair and Miranda Carruthers-Watt.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

RESOLVED – There were no Declarations on Interest received.

3 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th June 2022 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

4 **Review Code of Conduct**

A report was submitted to the Standards Committee for the Members to consider the new Council values and behaviours and to review the Members Code of Conduct.

The Localism Act 2011, Section 27, 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 and the recommendations made in the Committee on Standards in Public Life report on local government ethical standards, in January 2021.

The Committee agreed not to adopt the 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 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 and 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 for 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.

RESOLVED – That the Members Code of Conduct would be reviewed and recommend any amendments after the Members had attended the training session on 12th October 2022.

5 Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Values

Fiona Eastwood, HR Manager, delivered a presentation to the Committee on the Council's new values and behaviours.

It was noted that the Behaviour Framework needed to be updated therefore employee voice champions were consulted from across Council services, surveys were conducted to engage with more colleagues and feedback was considered which largely reflected the discussions throughout the workshops and demonstrated how positively the values and behaviours had resonated with colleagues.

The employee voice champions started the programme in January 2022 and attended work shop programmes to decide on the new values and behaviours for the Council. The new values and behaviours were 'Trust, Respect, Ambition, Collaboration, Kindness'. The words put together make 'TRACK'.

RESOLVED - That the presentation be noted.

6 Discussion on any proposed changes to the Code of Conduct

It was noted that the discussion on any proposed changes to the Code of Conduct would be deferred to the next Standards Committee after the Values and Behaviours Members training took place on 12th October.

RESOLVED – That the item would be deferred until the next Committee meeting

7 Complaints Update

The Monitoring Officer, Asad Laher, updated the committee on complaints that had been received since June 2022.

It was noted that there were no complaints.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed