

Part A

Report to: Standards Committee

Date of meeting: Wednesday, 27 January 2021

Report author: Group Head of Democracy and Governance

Title: LGA Model Code of Conduct

1.0 Summary

1.1 The Committee will recall that at its meeting in February 2020 it considered a report by the Committee for Standards in Public Life who had undertaken a review of standards in local government. This included a number of recommendations in relation to local authorities' codes of conduct. At the time the LGA were in the process of working on a new model code of conduct for councillors that they were consulting on. In consultation with the chair of this committee and having written to all members of this committee to obtain views the Group Head of Democracy and Governance responded to that consultation on behalf of the council.

1.2 The LGA on 3 December 2020 published their proposed Model Code of Conduct. This is attached as Appendix 1. The Committee is asked if it wishes to recommend to Council replacing the council's existing code with this new model.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
That the committee does not agree to replace the code	The council will continue to operate under its existing code.	That the new code be adopted.	treat	1

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That the committee recommends to council the adoption of the LGA Model Code of Conduct.

Further information:

Carol Chen

carol.chen@watford.gov.uk

Tel: 01923 278350

4.0 Detailed proposal

4.1 Following the publishing of the review by the Committee for Standards in Public Life into standards in local government and their suggested recommendations. The LGA has been working on a Model Code of Conduct for Councillors with a view to having a commonly adopted code for all tiers of local government. In consultation with the chair of this committee and having written to all members of the committee, the Group Head of Democracy and Governance responded to the LGA's consultation on the code in the summer.

4.2 The LGA finally published the model code on 3 December 2020 and it is attached as Appendix 1. It is not very different to the council's own current code of conduct but it does have useful guidance after each obligation and is explicit when it will apply and also includes references to use of social media, which can be a challenging area, particularly when using personal accounts to communicate with residents and others.

4.3 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance would recommend that the LGA code is adopted by the council. It is likely to be adopted across Hertfordshire and will therefore give the public and twin hatted councillor's consistency.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications in this report.

5.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that under the Localism Act 2011 all councils are required to adopt a code of conduct for councillors. Should the committee be minded to change the council's current code it will need to recommend the change to full council.

5.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

5.3.1 Having had regard to the council's obligations under s149, it is considered the LGA code has the necessary obligation requiring councillors to treat others with respect and promote equalities and not unlawfully discriminate against any person.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 N/A

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 N/A

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 N/A

5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 N/A

Appendices

Appendix 1 LGA Model Code of Conduct

Background papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.