

Report to Standards Committee

Subject: Review of the Code of Conduct

Date: 16 December 2013

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1. Purpose of the Report

To seek the views of the Committee about whether the Code of Conduct should be amended to reflect the new descriptions of the Seven Principles of Public Life.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council's Code of Conduct, when viewed as a whole to be consistent with the following principles –
- a) selflessness;
 - b) integrity;
 - c) objectivity;
 - d) accountability;
 - e) openness;
 - f) honesty;
 - g) leadership.

These are known as the 'Nolan Principles' or the Seven Principles of Public Life. In January 2013, the Committee on Standards in Public Life published "*Standards matter: A review of best practice in promoting good behaviour in public life*". As part of the review the Committee looked at the seven principles and concluded that changing them would be "pointless and unnecessary". However the Committee decided to amend the words used to describe them as there were a number of areas where the descriptions could usefully be brought up to date.

- 2.2 The Council's Code of Conduct sets out the Seven Principles of Public Life with the old descriptions. An extract of the Code of Conduct is attached at Appendix 1. The revised descriptions which the Committee on Standards in Public Life intends to use are set out in Appendix 2. The Committee is asked to consider whether the Code of Conduct should be amended so as to replace the current descriptions with appropriate wording to reflect the revised descriptions set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

2.3 The descriptions set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life refer to “holders in public office” and are written in the third person. In order to assist members in understanding their obligations, it is proposed that the revised descriptions should be written in the first person. The suggested wording is contained in Appendix 3.

3. Proposal

It is proposed that the Standards Committee recommends to Full Council that the Council’s Code of Conduct be amended as set out in Appendix 3 so that it reflects the revised descriptions of the Seven Principles of Public Life published by Committee on Standards in Public Life.

4. Resource Implications

None.

5. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Standards Committee recommends to Full Council that the Council’s Code of Conduct be amended as set out in Appendix 3 so that it reflects the revised descriptions of the Seven Principles of Public Life published by Committee on Standards in Public Life.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Extract from the Council’s Code of Conduct

Appendix 2 – Revised descriptions of the Seven Principles of Public Life

Appendix 3 - Revised descriptions of the Seven Principles of Public Life to be included in the Code of Conduct.