

## Report to Standards Committee

**Subject:** Update on Code of Conduct training and Register of Members' Interests (borough and parishes) following the May 2019 elections

**Date:** 4 July 2019

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### 1. Purpose

To inform members of the Standards Committee about the code of conduct training delivered to Borough Councillors following the elections in May 2019 and the current position with regard to the Register of Members' Interests forms received from Borough and Parish Members and Co-opted Members.

**Recommendation:**

THAT the Committee notes the report and provides comments on whether Code of Conduct training should be offered to Parish Councils.

### 2. Background

2.1 A comprehensive induction programme for all Members of Gedling Borough Council has been delivered following the election in May 2019. This included Code of Conduct training which was delivered by the Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer on 16 May 2019. The training covered obligations under the Code, declaring and registering interests, gifts and hospitality, conflict, pre-determination/bias and the process for dealing with Code of Conduct complaints. 24 out of 41 councillors attended the training. Prior to the training all Members had been sent a copy of detailed guidance on the Code of Conduct, briefing note on pre-determination and bias, guidance notes on completing the Register of Interest form and the Gifts and Hospitality Code of Practice for Members and Officers. Following the training a copy of the slides and examples of breaches of the Code of Conduct were also distributed to all Members. Where requested, one to one support has been given to Members to assist with the completion of the Register of Interests forms.

2.2 As members of the Committee are aware, the Monitoring Officer is responsible for establishing and maintaining a Register of Interests of members and co-opted

members of Borough Council and Parish Councils within the borough. All members and co-opted members of the Borough Council and Parish Councils within the borough are required to complete a register of interests form so that their interests can be duly registered.

- 2.3 There are 41 Borough Councillors and currently 2 co-opted Members on the Standards Committee, all of whom have completed their register of interests forms. The forms, together with any amendments forms, are kept in a file by the Monitoring Officer and are available for inspection. The information contained within the forms is now published on the Council's website.
- 2.4 Currently there are 11 Parish Councils within the borough plus 1 parish meeting at Stoke Bardolph. Appendix 1 sets out the position, as at the date of drafting of this report, with regard to the forms received from Parish Councillors. Once received, acknowledgements are sent to the Parish Clerks for their records. The forms, together with any amendments forms, are kept in a file by the Monitoring Officer and are available for inspection. The information contained within the forms will also be published on the Borough Council's website and a link is sent to the Parish Clerks, which they must publish on the Parish Council's own website if it has one.
- 2.5 In 2015 it was agreed by the Standards Committee that the Monitoring Officer should offer a training session to Parish Councils on the Code of Conduct. Following the election in May 2015, the Monitoring Officer wrote to all Parish Council Clerks asking whether the Parish Council would be interested in receiving such training and if so whether there were any specific topics they wanted to be trained on. Unfortunately only 2 responses were received and, in light of the lack of interest, training was not provided. The views of the Standards Committee are sought on whether Code of Conduct training should be offered again to Parish Councils.

### **3. Proposal**

It is proposed that the Committee notes the report and provides comments on whether Code of Conduct training should be offered to Parish Councils.

### **4. Resource Implications**

Any training delivered to Parish Councils would come from existing Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer resource.

### **5. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Summary of the Register of Interest Forms received from Parish Councillors

**6. Background papers**

None identified.