

Report to Standards Committee

Subject: Update on implementation of the best practice recommendations from the Committee on Standards in Public Life Report – Review of Local Government Ethical Standards.

Date: 26 September 2019

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1. Purpose of the Report

To update Standards Committee in relation to progress against the agreed action plan to implement the best practice recommendations set out in the Committee on Standards in Public Life report following the review of local government ethical standards.

Recommendation

THAT:

The progress made to implement the best practice recommendations set out in the Committee on Standards in Public Life report at Appendix 1 be noted.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Committee on Standards in Public Life report on Ethical Standards in Public Life was initially considered by the Standards Committee on 21 February 2019 and it was agreed that steps be taken to introduce all the best practice recommendations in order to demonstrate the Committee's continued commitment to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the Council. At the meeting on 4 July 2019, the Standards Committee agreed an action plan for implementing those best practice recommendations.
- 2.2 A copy of the action plan showing progress against each action is attached at Appendix 1. Key achievements since the last meeting include the following:

- a) The amended Code of Conduct was approved by Council on 17 July and published on the Council's website on 30 July.
 - b) The amended Arrangements for dealing with complaints was approved by Standards Committee on 4 July and published on the website on 9 July 2019.
 - c) Letters have been sent to Parish Council clerks by the Monitoring Officer and Chair of the Standards Committee notifying them of the amendments to the Code of Conduct and Arrangements and requesting that they adopt the updated Gedling Borough Council Code of Conduct.
- 2.3 The Standards Committee also made an additional recommendation to explore support which can be put in place for elected Members who are suffering bullying and intimidation. It was agreed that the Monitoring Officer should write to all Borough and Parish Councillors requesting evidence of specific examples of bullying, intimidation or threats they have experienced. As at the date of writing the report, all Borough Councillors have been contacted and only 3 responses have been received. The Monitoring Officer will write to Parish Councillors and will report the findings to a future meeting of the Committee.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Committee notes the progress made to implement the best practice recommendations set out in the Committee on Standards in Public Life report at Appendix 1.

4. Resources Implications

None.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Updated action plan for implementation of the best practice recommendations.

6. Background papers

Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life
Local Government Ethical Standards - A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-ethical-standards-report>