

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL
13 DECEMBER 2021**

**REVIEW OF MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT- REFERENCE
FROM THE AUDIT BOARD**

1. Summary

1.1 To receive a reference from the Audit Board relating to the revised Member Code of Conduct and to recommend accordingly.

2. RECOMENDATION

2.1 That, as recommended by the Audit Board, the revised Member Code of Conduct, at Appendix A to the report, be adopted.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1 At its meeting on 22 September 2021 [Min.No 19], the Audit Board considered the revised Member Code of Conduct, at Appendix A to the report.

3.2 The challenge for the Council is to maintain a high ethical standards system, which serves the best instincts of councillors, whilst addressing unacceptable behaviour by a minority, and guarding against potential corporate standards' risks.

3.3 It is important that the Member Code of Conduct does not amount to just a restatement of the Nolan Principles, but specifies what the Principles demand in a specific context, in order to guide behaviour. This will avoid protracted arguments about what sort of behaviour falls under a particular Principle.

3.4 To enhance the Member Code of Conduct's clarity, consistency and quality, and to ensure that important areas such as bullying, harassment, equalities, respect and disrepute provisions are included, the Code was reviewed by the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer. The amendments to the Code are as shown in red script at Appendix A to the report.

3.5 Having considered the reasons for the amendments (as set out more fully in the report to the Audit Board at Appendix B), the Board recommends to the Council, the adoption of the revised Code (in accordance with draft minute no.19 at Appendix C).

3.6 Although not forming part of the Member Code of Conduct, the [LGA supporting guidance](#) should help Members comply with the Member Code of Conduct and assist the Council in consistency of approach towards its Code.

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4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The Council has an ongoing commitment to good corporate and ethical governance, which supports effective decision-making and an effective ethical governance framework. ‘

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

Financial Implications	None specifically
Legal Implications	As detailed in the body of the report
Staffing Implications	None specifically
Administrative Implications	None specifically
Risk Assessment	Having a Code that does not amount to just a restatement of the Principles but specifies what the Principles demand in a specific context, will guide behaviour and avoid protracted arguments about what sort of behaviour falls under a particular Principle

6. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not applicable

7. Appendices

Appendix A – [revised] Member Code of Conduct

Appendix B- report to the Audit Board 22.09.2021 - Review of Member Code of Conduct & Arrangements for Dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints under The Localism Act 2011

Appendix C – Audit Board draft minute no.19

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date / File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
		Marie Kelly-Stone Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer	Legal Services/ Corporate Services	N/A