

CONSULTATION ON DRAFT MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

Final Decision-Maker	Audit, Governance and Standards Committee
Lead Head of Service	Patricia Narebor, Head of Legal Partnership
Lead Officer and Report Author	Gary Rowland, Senior Lawyer Corporate Governance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

The Local Government Association (“LGA”) has committed to reviewing the current model member code of conduct, as recommended by the Committee on Standards in Public Life’s report into Local Government Ethical Standards.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee note the information set out in this report.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Maidstone Leadership Forum	25 June 2020
Audit, Governance and Standards Committee	29 July 2020

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1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	High standards of conduct are essential amongst Members in delivering the Council's priorities. The model Code of Conduct consultation supports this.	Principal Solicitor, Governance
Cross Cutting Objectives	No implications.	Principal Solicitor, Governance
Risk Management	This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications. An effective Code of Conduct and robust complaints procedure minimises the risk of Member misconduct and is part of an effective system of governance.	Principal Solicitor, Governance
Financial	No implications.	Principal Solicitor, Governance
Staffing	No implications.	Principal Solicitor, Governance
Legal	It is a requirement under the Localism Act 2011 that all Councils adopt a Code of Conduct and that the Code adopted must be based upon the Nolan Principles of Conduct in Public Life. The Members' Code of Conduct was adopted by Full Council and can be found within the Council's Constitution that can be viewed on the Council's website. The reporting process ensures that the Committee continues its oversight of the Code of Conduct as required by the Constitution.	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Privacy and Data Protection	No personal information is provided as part of the report.	Principal Solicitor, Governance
Equalities	No implications.	Principal Solicitor, Governance
Public Health	No implications.	Principal Solicitor, Governance

Crime and Disorder	No implications.	Principal Solicitor, Governance
Procurement	No implications.	Principal Solicitor, Governance

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Committee on Standards in Public Life is an independent, advisory, non-departmental public body, with a secretariat and budget provided by the Cabinet Office. It is responsible for:
- advising the Prime Minister on ethical issues relating to standards in public life
 - conducting broad inquiries into standards of conduct;
 - making recommendations as to changes in present arrangements; and
 - promoting the 7 principles of public life.
- 2.2 The LGA held an event on Civility in Public Life with a range of stakeholders at the end of 2019 and three consultation workshops at the beginning of 2020. LGA Consultants have also examined examples of good practice, both in local government and other professions. The LGA consultation draft model member code of conduct is the result of this initial work.
- 2.3 It is the intention to create additional guidance, working examples and explanatory text. The LGA very much welcome comment on the consultation draft and would particularly like to know if it stands up to the new ways of working that have been introduced and gives enough of a steer on social media and online activity.
- 2.4 A copy of the LGA Model Code of Conduct is attached at [Appendix 1](#).

Timescales and Providing Comments

- 2.5 The consultation on the draft member code of conduct will run for 10 weeks from Monday 8 June until Monday 17 August 2020. The LGA hope this will provide officers and members with enough time to reflect on the draft model member code of conduct and provide them with feedback whilst they continue to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.
- 2.6 To facilitate the consultation, the LGA have produced an online consultation questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed for both members and officers and can be accessed at the following link:
https://research.local.gov.uk/jfe/form/SV_bIupYNXmiJ0xECV
- 2.7 A copy of the questionnaire can be found at [Appendix 2](#).
- 2.8 The LGA are also happy to receive narrative responses from council officers, members or stakeholder groups via email at ModelCode@local.gov.uk.

- 2.9 Questions regarding the consultation and/or code of conduct work can also be emailed to this address.
- 2.10 If you are interested in discussing the draft code in more detail, the LGA will be holding a number of webinars over the summer. The details will be on the LGA events page at the following link - <https://www.local.gov.uk/events>.
- 2.11 The feedback from the consultation will assist the LGA in developing a final draft, which will be reviewed by the LGA's Executive Advisory Board before being presented to the next LGA General Assembly, which is currently scheduled to be held in the autumn of 2020.
- 2.12 Following this, a report will be prepared for the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee so that an update can be provided for the September 2020 meeting.
- 2.13 The information set out in this report was provided to all group leaders in June 2020 and has also been sent to all Parish Clerks within the Maidstone Borough.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee note the update on the model Code of Conduct consultation.

4. REPORT APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Copy of the LGA Model Code of Conduct.

Appendix 2 - Copy of the LGA questionnaire.