

**Minutes of** **Code of Conduct Working Group**

**Meeting date** **Thursday, 16 December 2021**

**Members present:** Councillors Carol Wooldridge (in the Chair); Jacqui Mort, Angela Turner, David Haley (Independent Person) and Barry Parsonage (Independent Person)

**Officers:** Chris Moister (Director of Governance), Dave Whelan (Shared Services Lead - Legal & Deputy Monitoring Officer) and Clare Gornall (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

## **1 Appointment of Chair**

RESOLVED:– That Councillor Wooldridge be appointed Chair of this Working Group.

## **2 Apologies**

There were none.

## **3 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

## **4 Report to Code of Conduct Working Group**

The Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer presented a report asking members to agree the Terms of Reference and timetabling for the proposed review of the Council's Code of Conduct and Complaints and Investigations Procedure.

To put the proposed review in context, he explained that a new Local Government Association Model Code of Conduct had been published in November 2020 (subsequently revised in May 2021) and that in September 2021 the LGA had issued a new model investigations procedure.

He suggested that it may be useful for members to consider the adoption of a locally tailored Code based on the LGA model. It was also prudent to review the Complaints and Investigations Procedure to ensure that the process was fit for purpose and met the objectives of the Council.

Some of the key points made were:-

- There were practical advantages of having the same or similar Code to the LGA especially for different tiers of Local Government.
- Should members sign up annually to a Code of Conduct (in addition to signing the Declaration of Acceptance of Office when elected).

Members agreed that there was a lot information to consider with the report; therefore, it was suggested that the Working Group take time before the next meeting to read the documents in more depth and consider how the Model Code might meet the objectives of the Council. It was also agreed that the Model Code and Investigations Procedure be considered at separate meetings.

RESOLVED:-

1. That the Terms of Reference at paragraphs 16 – 18 of the report be approved;
2. That that the Working Group take time before the next meeting to read the documents in more depth and consider how the LGA Model Code might meet the objectives of the Council;
3. That the next meeting of the Working Group be used to consider the Model Code of Conduct; and
4. That following (3), a separate meeting be convened shortly afterwards to consider the Complaints and Investigations Procedure.

Chair

Date