



Report to: Council, 14th July 2020

Report of: Chair of Standards Committee

Subject: REFERRAL REPORT FROM STANDARDS COMMITTEE, 13TH NOVEMBER 2019 – CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Recommendation

1.1 That the Council adopts the draft Code of Conduct attached to this report and delegates authority to the Council's Monitoring Officer to make any minor changes necessary to the Constitution to give effect to this recommendation.

2. Information

- 2.1 At the meeting on 13th November 2019, the Standards Committee considered a report from the Monitoring Officer on the Nolan Committee's recommendations for improvement to government in relation to the legislative regime, and best practice recommendations to local government. A copy of the report is attached (**Appendix 1**).
- 2.2 The Committee noted the recommendations of the report published by the National Committee on Standards in Public Life on ethical standards in local government. A number of the recommendations would require changes to national legislation and this is not forthcoming. In the meantime, local authorities were invited to consider whether any minor amendments to their local code of conduct should be made to take account of the best practice recommendations of the Nolan Committee.
- 2.3 The Committee noted the discussions which have taken place between the Monitoring Officers of the principal authorities within Worcestershire in response to those recommendations. There is a consensus that a pan-Worcestershire Code remains the best approach for the benefit of the public, Members, and good governance. The Monitoring Officers considered that the current Code was fit for purpose, but would benefit from a few relatively small amendments flowing from some of the Nolan best practice recommendations relevant to the Code.
- 2.4 The Committee endorsed the principle of a pan-Worcestershire Code of Conduct for Members and the draft Code of Conduct appended to the report, and recommended that Council adopts it.
- 2.5 It was noted that a further report will be brought to Committee following a review of the Council's Procedures for the Assessment of Complaints under the Code of Conduct.
- 2.6 It was also noted that the Worcestershire Code will need to be subject to a more comprehensive review if there are national legislative changes to the local government standards regime in the future.

- 2.7 Following the work of the Monitoring Officers group, this revised draft Code has now been adopted by some of the Worcestershire councils.
- 2.8 If this draft Code is approved by the Council, the Monitoring Officer will brief the city's Parish Councils on it so that they consider if they wish to adopt it.

Ward(s): All Wards
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Background Papers: None