

**LGA MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCILLORS**

**Report of the Strategic Head of Service & Monitoring Officer (Legal and Democratic Governance)**

**1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the Standards Committee on the current position regarding the LGA's Model Code of Conduct for Councillors, the guidance that has been issued to support the Model in order to assist the Standards Committee in deciding whether it wishes to recommend the adoption of the LGA Model Code to the Council.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At the meeting on 18 February 2021 the Monitoring Officer updated the committee on the LGA's new Model Code of Conduct issued by the LGA on 23 December 2020. It was resolved at that meeting that the Model Code be amended to include further clarity on Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and then submitted to the Constitution Working Party for consideration. The amendments suggested by the committee included that a table with examples and definitions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests be included and perhaps some amendments to the appendices relating to social media.
- 2.2 Following that meeting and prior to the report being taken to the Constitution Working Party, various concerns were raised with the LGA by various Local Authorities about the lack of clarity regarding Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. The LGA agreed to reconsider the code and revert to Monitoring Officers.
- 2.3 At the meeting on 5 July 2021 the Monitoring Officer updated the committee that the GM Chief Legal Officers were meeting to discuss whether to adopt the LGA Model Code on a GM wide basis and to discuss the clarity required on DPIs. The outcome of that meeting was that a number of the other Local Authorities had adopted the LGA Model Code and that others were not yet adopting it as they wanted to wait to see if a Mandatory Code would be brought out by the Government as part of its response to the recommendation from the Committee on Standards in Public Life that one be introduced (which as yet, has not been published) and also wanted to await the guidance from the LGA on clarification regarding the DPIs.
- 2.4 Attached to this Report is an email from the LGA dated 21 September 2021 together with a Revised Model Code of Conduct with the revisions in Tracked Changes which essentially cover:-
- 2.4.1 to reflect the guidance relating to Other Registrable Interests (ORIs)
  - 2.4.2 to tidy up the executive arrangements section
  - 2.4.3 to add in missing text from Table 2
  - 2.4.4 a number of typographical corrections.

2.5 On 7 October 2021 the LGA published its guidance on handling complaints under the new Model Code. The link to that guidance is below:-

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/guidance-member-model-code-conduct-complaints-handling>

2.6 In January 2022 the LLG (Law in Local Government) confirmed that they had been commissioned by the LGA to develop a training pack to support the new LGA Model Code of Conduct and a meeting was held with various Local Authority Monitoring Officers via Zoom on 24 January 2022. The LLG have proposed a draft training pack for Monitoring Officers which is now being finalised but as yet, has not been received, but which should not affect the outcome of this committee meeting.

### **3. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

3.1 None identified as yet.

### **4. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

4.1 The Model Code of Conduct referred to in this report is a voluntary code and Local Authorities do not have to adopt it – they can retain their current codes.

### **5. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

5.1 None identified as yet.

### **6. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

6.1 None identified as yet.

### **7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.1 None identified.

### **8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 The Committee are to consider whether to recommend to the Constitution Working Party that the new Model Code of Conduct be adopted.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There are none

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Vicki Bates

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