

Standards Committee

31 October 2022 – At a meeting of the Standards Committee held at 2.15 pm at County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ.

Present: Cllr Bradbury (Chairman)

Cllr Wickremaratchi, Cllr Burrett, Cllr Cherry, Cllr Kenyon, Cllr Lord, Cllr Sparkes and Cllr Wild

Apologies were received from Cllr Johnson and Mr Cooper (Independent Person)

Also in attendance: Mr Donaldson (Independent Person)

Part I

8. Declarations of Interest

8.1 None declared.

9. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

9.1 The Committee considered the draft minutes and asked for three minor corrections to be made – firstly to add the word 'of' in the first line of minute 3.3; secondly, to add the word 'be' in the first line of minute 4.4 and thirdly to correct the spelling of 'model' in minute 4.5, resolution (3).

9.2 Resolved – That, subject to the minor corrections agreed in minute 9.1 above, the minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 27 June 2022 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

10. Code of Conduct

10.1 The Committee received a report by the Director of Law and Assurance (copy appended to the signed minutes).

10.2 The report was introduced by the Director of Law and Assurance, who advised that the Model Code of Conduct from the Local Government Association had been used as the basis for the draft Code of Conduct, with some minor changes to remove information not relevant to the County Council and to keep bespoke guidance from the existing Code of Conduct which was not found in the model text.

10.3 The Committee supported the proposed text of the draft Code of Conduct, acknowledging that the main benefit of changing to this new version was to provide consistency to the public with other local councils' codes of conduct.

10.4 Members commented that the changes between the first and second person could be confusing to readers, so asked for the information

in the second person, which is mostly guidance to the member, should appear in an alternative format in the final draft.

- 10.5 Members asked that some other minor reformatting be carried out and highlighted that in the first paragraph of section 4, a clearer reference to co-opted members when ceasing their role was needed and that the guidance at the end of paragraph 8.4 needed expanding to reflect the old Code's specific wording against the intimidation of witnesses.
- 10.6 Resolved – That subject to the changes requested in minutes 10.4 and 10.5, that the draft Code of Conduct be endorsed for submission to the County Council for approval in December 2022.

11. Whistleblowing Policy

- 11.1 The Committee noted that the Director of Law and Assurance has received two referrals via the Whistleblowing Policy, which are currently being investigated and that a full report will be made when the matters are concluded in due course.

12. Date of Next Meeting

- 12.1 The Committee noted that the next meeting is due to be held on 19 June 2023.

The meeting ended at 2.47 pm

Chairman