

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS' LIAISON COMMITTEE

meeting date: THURSDAY, 1 APRIL 2021
title: LGA MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT & STANDARDS ARRANGEMENTS
(MEMBER CONDUCT)
Author: HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform committee of the recommendations of best practice from the Committee of Standards in Public Life ("**CoSPL**"), the launch of the LGA Model Code of Conduct ("**Model Code**") and the amendments which have been made to the Council's Standards Arrangements ("**Arrangements**").

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – }
 - Corporate Priorities – }
 - Other Considerations – }
- The Council has a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Parish Councillors.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Localism Act 2011 ("Act") requires Councils (including Parish Councils) to:

- Promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members
- Adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members when they are acting in that capacity.

2.2 The Act also provides that a Parish Council may comply with the provision to adopt a code by adopting the borough council's. Some Parish Council's have chosen to adopt the Council's Code of Conduct and others have adopted different Codes which comply with the requirements of the Act.

2.3 The Council is required by the Act to have in place Arrangements to deal with an allegation of a breach of the relevant code of conduct. This includes allegations that a member of a Parish Council has breached its code of conduct. The Council began a review of its Arrangements in 2020. In addition, the CoSPL published its review on Local Government Ethical Standards in January 2019. Within that review they set out a list of 15 items of best practice. The list of best practice is contained at Appendix 1 to this report.

2.5 The CoSPL also recommended that the Local Government Association ("LGA") should create an updated model code of conduct, in consultation with representative bodies of councillors and officers of all tiers of local government. The LGA has now done so, and a copy is enclosed as Appendix 2 to this report.

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council has now made amendments to its Arrangements to address those issues raised by the CoSPL and in its own review. The Arrangements are enclosed as Appendix 3. These are the Arrangements which will be referred to should an allegation be made about a member of a Parish Council.
- 3.2 The Council will consider whether to adopt the LGA Model Code as a whole or with some amendment at its Accounts and Audit Committee in April 2021. It is understood that Guidance will also be issued by the LGA at the end of March 2021.
- 3.3 Once the Council has adopted a revised Code of Conduct, it is the intention of the Monitoring Officer, to run a series of training sessions for Parish Councillors later in the year.
- 3.3 Committee should also note that the Society of Local Council Clerks has also recently launched a Governance Toolkit. A link to the toolkit is attached which can be accessed if your clerk is a member of this organisation.

<https://www.slcc.co.uk/local-council-governance-toolkit-to-support-local-council-officers/>

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:
- Resources – Resources will be required to provide training to Parish Council's on standards.
 - Technical, Environmental and Legal – N/A
 - Political – N/A
 - Reputation – The Council's reputation will be enhanced by.
 - Equality & Diversity – N/A

5 CONCLUSION(S)

- 5.1 That Committee note the content of this report.

MAIR HILL
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for Mair Hill extension 4418

REF: MJH/Parish Council Liaison/1421

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

- Report to Accounts and Audit Committee 25 November 2020