

Review of Codes and Protocols

Standards Committee

Date: 25th January 2016

Author: Director of Law and Democratic Services
Wards: All
Locality Affected: All
Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To present to the Committee the Council's current Codes and Protocols for review.
- 1.2 The regular review of the Codes and Protocols is necessary to ensure that these remain appropriate and up to date.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 To review the following Codes and Protocols, in the light of submissions for amendment put forward by members of the Committee, relevant officers and Parish Councils, following consultation, and to determine whether any changes should be made. *(Copies of the codes and protocols have been circulated to members previously. These are also contained within the Council's Constitution and can be inspected on the website. Further copies can be provided via Committee and Member Services on request).*
 - Members' Code of Conduct.
 - Officers' Code of Conduct.
 - Monitoring Officer Protocol.
 - Councillor Role Definitions.
 - Guidance to Councillors on dealings with the media.
 - Protocol of Member/Officer Relationships.
 - Local Code of Governance.
 - Members Planning Code of Good Practice.
 - Public Question Time at Council Meetings.
 - Recording, Photography and use of social media.

3. Detail

- 3.1 The Standards Committee regularly reviews the Council's Codes and Protocols to ensure that these remain appropriate and up to date. At its meeting on 12th October 2015, members' views were sought regarding the effectiveness of the codes and protocols and whether changes were required to ensure these remain fit for purpose.

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- 3.2 The Committee resolved that, in order to facilitate the Standards Committee's consideration of the Council's Codes and Protocols, and in line with the procedure utilised for previous reviews, the Monitoring Officer consult on each of the Codes and Protocols with relevant officers, the political groups on the Council, and also with Parish Councils, and recommend any valid changes to the Standards Committee at its meeting in January 2016.
- 3.3 In accordance with the Committee's instruction, a consultation process was commenced in November 2015. The following were consulted with responses requested by 22nd December 2015:
- Members of the Standards Committee.
 - All Parish Councils.
 - The Political Groups on the Council (via the Political Assistants and Councillor Stan Pajak (on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group)).
 - Board Directors and Heads of Service.
- 3.4 Members of the Committee, themselves, were also invited to submit to the Monitoring Officer the details of any particular issues that they would wish to be considered as part of the review of the codes and protocols.
- 3.5 No submissions have been received.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 No alternative options to carrying out this review are being put forward. The Committee can, of course, choose not to consider the report.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 This report has no specific financial or procurement implications.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and human rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 No other implications have been identified.

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Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 Ensuring that its codes and protocols are regularly updated and remain fit for purpose will aid the Council's operational and decision-making processes and help in the achievement of corporate objectives and priorities.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed as the report is not recommending any changes in policy.

Risk Management

- 5.6 A Risk Assessment has not been completed as the report is not recommending any changes in policy.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.
- 6.2 Other consultees are as listed in the report.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 The Council's Current Codes and Protocols (as set out in the Swindon Borough Council Constitution 2013/14)

8. Appendices

- 8.1 None