

# Employee Code of Conduct

Standards Committee

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> July 2006

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**Author:** Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and  
Director, Human Resources

**Parish / Wards Affected:** None

## Purpose

- To seek Standards Committee's endorsement of a Code of Conduct for Swindon Borough Council employees.

## Recommendation

- Standards Committee is requested to approve the proposed Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) and authorise the Director, Human Resources to commence communication and roll-out in partnership with staff representative unions.

## 1. Reasons

- 1.1 Sound corporate governance demands that have strategies in place to ensure that we make our expectations of staff clear, and have fair and transparent ways of dealing with instances where behaviour falls below expectations. The most appropriate way for this to occur is through the adoption of a Code of Conduct.

## 2. Detail

- 2.1 As outlined in a previous paper to Standards Committee in March 2006, the Secretary of State has been considering the issue of a generic Code of Conduct for local government employees for some time. Discussions on the issue remain unresolved.
- 2.2 In the absence of national guidance, the Council determined that it would develop and implement a local Code of Conduct as part of our commitment to sound corporate governance, and demonstration of value for money. Standards Committee considered a draft version of the Code at its March meeting.
- 2.3 With Standards Committee's endorsement, the Director Human Resources initiated and has now concluded, a successful consultation process with local staff representative unions.
- 2.4 The attached Code incorporates the changes arising from the consultation process, including those relating to convictions and cautions raised by the Standards Committee. Further legal advice on this section of the Code was also sought. No matters of substance were changed as a result of the union consultation process.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rebecca McKenzie on *Direct Dial No. 3215* or Email [rmckenzie@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:rmckenzie@swindon.gov.uk).

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- 2.5 The final draft, as presented, was endorsed by the Council's Staff Joint Committee at its meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2006.

## Alternative Options

- None proposed.

## Risk Management

### *Financial and Procurement Implications*

- The need for an Employee Code of Conduct has been highlighted in previous Audit reports. By ensuring that all employees are familiar with its contents we will seek to minimise the Council's risk in relation to fraud, corruption and misadministration at the hand of its employees.

### *Legal / Human Rights Implications*

- The Code of Conduct will form an important part of an employee's contract of employment with the Council. It will apply to all staff, regardless of employment status. The Code will provide a transparent framework against which appropriate behaviour can be measured.

### *Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)*

- Having an Employee Code of Conduct will also contribute to the Council's Use of Resources Assessment under CPA and will contribute to the Council's achievement of Promise 14 – to be an employer of choice.

## Consultees

- Staff Joint Committee
- Staff representative trades unions
- Head of Internal Audit
- Human Resources officers representing Directorate and Group Directorate leadership teams.
- The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Democratic Services are consulted on all reports.

## Background Papers and Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Code of Conduct