

Ethical Audit Desktop Analysis
Matrix of Key Information held by Swindon Borough Council
November 2017

	Key Information	Held	Current position, including action taken since the last review in November 2016	Area of review or action to be identified by the Standards Committee
1	Constitutions / Current Decision Making Framework	Yes	<p>The Constitution is reviewed and updated at least annually, and was last adopted in May 2017.</p> <p>The Constitution's operation is monitored by the Council's Monitoring Officer, and also by the Corporate Governance Review Working Group whose recommendations feed into the review process.</p> <p>The Council's Audit Committee was first established in May 2006 and continues to operate effectively. It receives assurances from the Standards Committee in relation to matters of internal control such as the operation of the Whistleblowing Policy.</p> <p>The Annual Audit Letter summarises the key findings arising from the work carried out by the External Auditor. The Annual Audit Letter for 2016/17 confirmed unqualified opinions for the year ended 31 March 2017 in relation to the Council's financial statements and its VFM conclusion in relation to the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.</p>	
2	Procedural Standing Orders	Yes	Updated in Constitution – May 2017	
3	Contracts Standing Orders	Yes	Updated in Constitution – May 2017	
4	Employees' Code Of Conduct	Yes	Following consultation with Council employees and	

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			<p>unions, the Employee Code of Conduct was initially approved by the Standards Committee in July 2006. The Code of Conduct is issued to all Council employees, who are required to sign to confirm that they have read and will act in accordance with the Code.</p> <p>The Code of Conduct is intended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help officers to understand how they can fulfil their ethical obligations in performing their role. • set clear expectations for their conduct as a public employee in the Council. • provide guidance to help them deal properly with ethical issues they might encounter in their work. <p>The Code is submitted to Council annually for approval. It was approved at the Annual Council meeting in May 2017.</p>	
5	Members' Code Of Conduct	Yes	<p>The new Members Code of Conduct was adopted in June 2012, taking effect on 1 July 2012, under the Localism Act 2011. The Code is reviewed annually. It was last reviewed in January 2017 and was subsequently adopted at the Annual Council meeting in May 2017.</p> <p>Procedures for determining complaints against councillors were the subject of review during the 2013/14 and 2014/15 Municipal Years. A number of changes to the "Arrangements for dealing with member Code of Conduct complaints" were agreed by Standards Committee at its meeting on 21 July 2014 and these were incorporated into the process.</p>	

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			The Monitoring Officer has provided guidance and training on the Members Code of Conduct to Officers and Members, together with Parish Clerks and Parish Councillors. Refresher training is also regularly provided.	
6	Confidential Reporting Procedure	Yes	<p>The Whistleblowing Policy was first approved in November 2001. It is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it complies with legislation and best practice.</p> <p>The approved Whistleblowing Policy is publicised through staff communications, including the Core Brief, Manager Bulletin and other publications as appropriate, and also via Team Briefings.</p> <p>Complaints received are investigated and the outcomes reported to the Standards Committee.</p> <p>In September 2005, the Committee approved the Council's subscription to the Public Concern at Work Helpline to provide a formal method of confidential reporting for staff who do not feel able to raise issues directly with the Council. The Council has maintained this provision, but also makes available the following support via a contract with Care First, the Council's employee assistance programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advice and information service • A counselling service • On-line information • A manager support service 	
7	Terms Of Reference of the Standards Committee	Yes	The current Standards Committee was established in July 2012, under the terms of the Localism Act 2011, giving Councils the option of whether to retain a	

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			Standards Committee or nominate another Committee to oversee the determination of Code of Conduct complaints. The Borough Council's Standards Committee retained much of its extended terms of reference, beyond the determination of complaints, in particular in relation to its monitoring of Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and Whistleblowing Complaints.	
8	Scheme Of Delegation	Yes	The Constitution was updated in the early part of the current Municipal Year and was subsequently approved as part of the 2017/2018 Constitution at the meeting of Annual Council in May 2017.	
9	Members' Register Of Interests	Yes	Held on file and on the Council's website. Regular reminders are issued. In accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act, the Council also now publishes Register of Interest forms for all Parish Councillors in the Borough Area.	
10	Recorded Declaration Of Interests	Yes	Interests are recorded at meetings and are recorded on the website.	
11	Members' Induction Process	Yes	All new Councillors are provided with a comprehensive induction programme in relation to the ethical framework and the decision-making process, as well as service specific issues. Attendance at the induction programme is monitored to ensure all new members are properly inducted. New Councillors elected in by-elections attend induction training following their election.	

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12	Officers' Induction Process	Yes	<p>A corporate induction process is in place and departmental induction processes are also in place.</p> <p>Reference is included in the Officers' Induction Process to the ethical framework. During staff induction, it is checked that staff have received a copy of the Code of Conduct (which they usually have with their contracts) and they are reminded that it is their responsibility to read it and speak with their manager if they have any concerns. Staff are also advised of the disclosure of gifts requirements, and are also advised to contact their managers with any concerns regarding this, or any special arrangements made (for example, working in a care home at Christmas where people may buy them lots of gifts/goodies).</p> <p>It is the responsibility of managers to enforce the Code of Conduct and ethics and probity issues with staff.</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer liaises with the Head of People, Performance and Engagement on evaluating the implementation across departments of training on the ethical framework within the Officers' Induction Programme and on the monitoring of the officer induction process.</p>	
13	Members' Continuing Development and Training	Yes	<p>A range of development / training opportunities are offered and a record of attendance kept.</p> <p>Training for Councillors is facilitated by Committee and Member Services, in consultation with a cross-party Member Development Advisory Group. This agrees the programme for training at the beginning of each year and</p>	

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			monitors the success of each course and the uptake from Councillors.	
14	Officers' Continuing Development	Yes	The Council's behaviour framework sets out the values and behaviours expected from officers and members. This currently forms part of the annual appraisal in place across the Council, and identifies development needs and provides structured options to accessing appropriate training.	
15	Officers' Training	Yes	The Council has launched an online Learning & Development resource (E-Zone), which provides practical learning and development materials. It includes mandatory E-learning modules as well as a number of useful resources to support staff. Information about available courses is accessed via ESS (Employee Self-Serve) and bookings can also be made through ESS.	
16	Other Council Specific Additional Codes And Protocols	Yes	<p><u>Monitoring Officer Protocol</u> - last reviewed and updated in January 2017. Approved by the Council at its Annual Meeting in May 2017.</p> <p><u>Guidance to Councillors on Dealing with the Media</u> – first adopted February 2002, and last reviewed and updated in January 2017. Approved by the Council at its Annual Meeting in May 2017.</p> <p><u>Protocol on Member / Officer Relations</u> - introduced September 2002, and last reviewed and updated in January 2017. Approved by the Council at its Annual Meeting in May 2017.</p> <p><u>Members' Planning Code of Good Practice</u> – first</p>	

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			<p>adopted February 2004, and last reviewed and updated in January 2017. Approved by the Council at its Annual Meeting in May 2017.</p> <p><u>Anti-Fraud and Bribery Strategy</u> – adopted November 2001 and regularly reviewed and updated. The strategy sets out best practice and complies with relevant legislation. A Fraud Response plan was developed by Internal Audit at the same time to assist managers in knowing how to deal with allegations of wrongdoing.</p> <p>The outcome of investigations are reported to the Standards Committee.</p> <p>A Swindon Internal Audit Services Bulletin is issued to Members and Officers approximately twice a year to promote fraud awareness by communicating information on frauds elsewhere to officers and Members, and enabling similar frauds to be prevented.</p>	