

Ethical Framework Matters

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

For further information about this report please contact Simon Hardiman Chief Fire Officer, on 01743 260201 or Anthea Lowe, Clerk and Monitoring Officer, on 01952 383219.

1 Executive Summary

This report deals with ethical framework matters, namely a review of the following documents:

- Members Code of Conduct
- Arrangements for with Complaints against Members
- Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form
- Process for seeking a Dispensation

2 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- a) note the report and the reviews undertaken by Officers; and
- b) agree any necessary amendments to the following documents:
 - Members Code of Conduct
 - Arrangements for with Complaints against Members
 - Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form
 - Process for seeking a Dispensation

3 Background

It is recommended good practice to review the Members' Code of Conduct annually and this action is included in the Committee's Work Plan. The Work Plan also states that officers will review relevant procedures and documents and report to Committee if significant changes are required.

4 Review of Standards Documents and Procedures

Members Code of Conduct

The current Code of Conduct was approved at the meeting of the Fire Authority in October 2021; a copy of this is attached at Appendix A. It was agreed that a review of the Code would also be undertaken annually, as part of the regular ethical framework report considered that is considered by this Committee. Officers currently recommend no amendments to this document.

Arrangements for dealing with complaints against Members

The current arrangements for dealing with standards allegations under the Localism Act 2011 are attached at Appendix B. These arrangements were considered and agreed by this Committee at its December 2021 to tie in with the significant changes that were made to the Code of Conduct, following the recommendations of the Committee for Standards in Public Life. There are currently no amendments recommended to this document.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form

The Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form has been updated to include the disclosure of non-pecuniary interests as required under the amended Code of Conduct. There are currently no amendments recommended to this document.

Process for seeking a Dispensation

The Dispensation Procedure is attached at Appendix D. There are currently no amendments proposed to this.

5 Conclusions

The Committee is asked to note the reviews that have been undertaken by Officers and agree any necessary amendments as outlined in the report.

6 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

7 Legal Comment

The statutory requirements for the Code of Conduct and associated ethical framework is set out at part 1, chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011. The Authority's current Code of Conduct is compliant with the requirements contained within the legislation. Any proposed changes to the Code must be formally adopted by the Fire Authority.

8 Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equality or diversity implications arising from this report. An e-EQIA is not, therefore, required.

9 Appendices

Appendix A

Member's Code of Conduct

Appendix B

Arrangements for dealing with standards allegations under the Localism Act 2011

Appendix C

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests Form

Appendix D

Process for seeking a Dispensation

10 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.