

**Time and Date**

11.00 am on Thursday, 27 June, 2024

Place

Diamond Rooms 1 and 2 - Council House

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)
 - a) To agree the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 March, 2024
 - b) Any matters arising
4. **Local Code of Corporate Governance 2024-25** (Pages 7 - 30)
Report of the Director of Law and Governance
5. **Annual Report of Ethics Committee 2023-24** (Pages 31 - 38)
Report of the Director of Law and Governance
6. **Code of Conduct Update** (Pages 39 - 46)
Report of the Director of Law and Governance
7. **Work Programme for the Ethics Committee 2024/25** (Pages 47 - 52)
Report of the Director of Law and Governance
8. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Council House, Coventry

Wednesday, 19 June 2024

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Suzanne Bennett, Governance Services Email: suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillors L Bigham, P Hetherington, S Nazir (Chair), E M Reeves, D Welsh

Independent Persons: S Atkinson, R Wills, P Wiseman

Public Access

Any member of the public who would like to attend the meeting in person is encouraged to contact the officer below in advance of the meeting regarding arrangements for public attendance. A guide to attending public meeting can be found here: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/publicAttendanceMeetings>

Suzanne Bennett, Governance Services

Email: suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Ethics Committee held at 11.00 am on Thursday, 21
March 2024

Present:

Members: Councillor S Nazir (Chair)
Councillor M Mutton (Substitute for Councillor Hetherton)
Councillor D Welsh

Independent Persons: S Atkinson
A Barton
R Wills
P Wiseman

Employees (by Service Area):

Law and Governance: J Newman (Director of Law and Governance), G Holmes, S
Manhertz (Trainee Solicitor), U Patel

Apologies: Councillors L Bigham and E M Reeves

Public Business

24. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interest.

25. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 December, 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

26. Members Training and Development Update

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance that provided information about the Members Training and Development Programme for 2023-24. The Members Training and Development Strategy was agreed by Council on 22 March 2022.

This was the second year of the strategy's implementation which allowed for some comparison on the previous year. Overall, there was an increase in members training from an average of 5.7 training sessions attended during 2022-23 to 6.5 training sessions attended during 2023-24. The report attached at Appendix 1 covered the following:

- Core Training May 2023-February 2024
- Overall Training Attendance
- Training Delivery
- Training Information

- All-Members Seminars
- Members feedback
- Training 2023/24 – Training Matrix
- Action Plan 2024-25

The Committee received assurances that members appointed to Planning and Licensing Committee would have to undertake mandatory training prior to participating in a formal meeting. The Committee expressed concern at the low uptake of the Equality and Diversity and the Data Protection training as these were areas that could put the council into a difficult position. Currently these were offered online and it was acknowledged that this method of training was not the preferred option of choice for some members. It was reported that alternate in person training was being sourced and would be made available as an option.

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- 1. Notes the attached report covering the Members Training and Development Programme for 2023-24, including plans for 2024-25.**
- 2. Considered ways in which to increase member's participation in training and development and to address barriers experienced in accessing the programme.**
- 3. Supports the continued delivery of the Members Training and Development Strategy, including actions for 2024-25.**

27. Six Monthly Review of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance which provided information on the six-monthly review of officers' gifts and hospitality register.

Further to the high level of attendance at one particular event, a question was asked whether there should be a column to capture what benefits were gained by the council from the attendance.

RESOLVED that, the Committee considered and notes the entries of gifts and hospitality received by Officers from 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023.

28. Six Monthly Review of Members' Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance which provided a six month review of the Members' Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality Register.

Following consideration of the report, Members commented that it was difficult to quantify the benefits of attending events as not only were they representing the council, but they were showcasing the city and networking. Events were beneficial to everyone involved.

RESOLVED that, the Committee considered and notes the gifts and hospitality register entries from 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023 and had no further recommendations to make.

29. **Code of Conduct Update**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance which provided an update on any national issues in relation to the ethical behaviour of elected Members and the local position in Coventry with regard to Code of Conduct issues.

With regard to the complaints made that the Mayor of London had breached the Code of Conduct for elected members with comments he had made, the Director of Law and Governance drew the Committee's attention to the independent investigator's report which summarised the position in respect of Freedom of Speech. The summary was detailed in the report and provided a helpful explanation of a matter that was often difficult to explain and understand but occurred quite regularly.

RESOLVED that, the Committee:

1. **Notes the position with regard to matters concerning local authorities nationally.**
2. **Notes the local position relating to the operation of the Council's Code of Conduct and delegates any actions arising from these to the Director of Law and Governance, following consultation with the Chair of the Ethics Committee.**

30. **Ethics Committee Work Programme 2023/24**

The Committee considered and noted a report of the Director of Law and Governance which outlined areas of work for the Ethics Committee for the Municipal Year 2023/24. The work programme was attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

It was reported that with regard to the programme for 2024/25, most matters for consideration would be standard items, and currently there was nothing else in the pipeline that needed to be included in the programme.

31. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

There were no items of urgent public business.

32. **Ann Barton**

The Chair, Councillor S Nazir, indicated that Ann Barton was attending her last meeting as she has decided to step down as an Independent Member of the Committee at the end of this Municipal Year.

Anne has been a dedicated and valued Independent Member of the Committee since her appointment in 2017. On behalf of the Committee, and the Council, the Chair, placed on record her sincerest appreciation of all of the work undertaken by Ann over the last 7 years and thanked her for her contribution to the meetings and the work of the Committee. Everyone wished Ann all the very best for the future.

(Meeting closed at 11.25 am)

Audit and Procurement Committee
Ethics Committee

24th June 2024
27th June 2024

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership – Councillor G Duggins

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Law and Governance

Ward(s) affected:

N/A

Title:

Local Code of Corporate Governance 2024/25

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive summary:

The Local Code of Corporate Governance sets out Coventry City Council's arrangements for meeting the seven principles of good governance as defined in the CIPFA/Solace Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. The Framework recommends that Local Authorities develop and maintain a Local Code of governance as it provides a structure to help individual authorities with their approach to governance.

The Council adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance in 2017. The Code has recently been reviewed in the light of best practice and updated to reflect the current governance arrangements in place within the Council. An up to date and robust Local Code provides clarity over an authority's governance and supports the legal requirement to undertake an annual review of effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements and produce an Annual Governance Statement.

Recommendations:

Audit and Procurement Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Consider the Local Code of Corporate Governance 2024/25 and confirm its satisfaction that the Code accurately represents the Council's governance arrangements.

Ethics Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Consider the Local Code of Corporate Governance 2024/25.

List of Appendices included:

The following appendix is attached to the report:

Appendix - Local Code of Corporate Governance

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents:

Code of Corporate Governance Report – Audit and Procurement Committee - 3rd April 2017
Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016 edition)
Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Guidance for English Local Authorities (2016 edition)

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel, or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Local Code of Corporate Governance

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1. The CIPFA/ Solace Framework defines governance as “the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.” Coventry City Council has a range of measures in place to ensure that governance in the organisation is managed effectively and works hard to ensure that these arrangements are robust and meet best practice. This is achieved through a range of policies, plans, procedures such as the Constitution (including codes of conduct for Members and employees), the One Coventry Plan, the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and policies on whistle blowing, tackling fraud and corruption, and managing risk.
- 1.2 The attached Local Code of Corporate Governance (Appendix 1 to the report) is a refresh of the previous code with work undertaken with internal stakeholders to ensure it reflects the current position of the organisation and our One Coventry approach. The Local Code sets out the Council’s specific arrangements for putting the principles of good governance into practice. It draws on examples provided in the Framework but also reflects systems and processes which are specific to the Council.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework” published by CIPFA / Solace sets the standard for local authority governance. The Framework is designed to help local authorities develop an informed approach to governance, aimed at achieving the highest standards in a measured and proportionate way. The Framework recommends that Council’s adopt a Local Code of governance. By setting out specifically how the Council puts the principles of good governance into practice, there is a greater degree of clarity and transparency over the arrangements in place, which in turns supports the annual review of effectiveness and development of the Annual Governance Statement.
- 2.2 The principles of good governance as detailed in the Framework are as follows:
- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
 - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
 - Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits
 - Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
 - Developing the entities capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
 - Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
 - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability
- 2.3 The Council adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance in 2017. In 2023 the Code was reviewed in the light of best practice and has this year been updated again to reflect the current governance arrangements in place within the Council. The review encompassed discussions with stakeholders from across the organisation. In addition, the updated Code has been considered by the Leadership Board. Consideration of the Code by the Audit and Procurement Committee supports comprehensive understanding of governance across the organisation and will assist the Committee in discharging its role in relation to the Annual Governance Statement.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1. No consultation has been undertaken.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 The Local Code of Governance reflects the Council's governance arrangements which are intended to be in place for the financial year 2024/25. The Council is required to undertake an annual review of the effectiveness of these arrangements and publish an Annual Governance Statement.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1. Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications associated with this report. Internal control / governance has clear and direct effects on finance within the Council. Since these vary widely, it is not useful to attempt to summarise them here, beyond noting that all systems and controls are designed to help improve value for money obtained, the probity and propriety of financial administration, and / or the management of operational risks.

5.2. Legal Implications

There is no legal requirement to adopt a Local Code. However, having an up to date and robust Local Code reflects best practice and helps to demonstrate the Council's commitment to good governance. It also supports the legal requirement to undertake an annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements and produce an Annual Governance Statement.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/one-coventry-plan>

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes (i.e., the internal control environment) and culture and values, by which the authority is directed and controlled, and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with, and leads the community. It enables the authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

The key risk is that the governance arrangements set out in the Local Code are not effective and / or are not complied with. This risk is managed through the requirement to undertake an annual review and produce an Annual Governance Statement. Where areas for improvement are identified, these are included in the Annual Governance Statement action plan.

6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

None

6.5. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

None

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

None

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Adrian West	Head of Governance	Law and Governance	3.4.24	5.4.24
Michelle Salmon	Governance Services Officer	Law and Governance	3.4.24	3.4.24
Karen Tyler	Chief Internal Auditor	Finance and Resources	3.4.24	5.4.24
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Graham Clark	Lead Accountant – Business Partnering	Finance and Resources	3.4.24	3.4.24
Councillor G Duggins	Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership	-	14.5.24	14.5.24

This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/council-meetings

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Local Code of Corporate Governance

2024/25

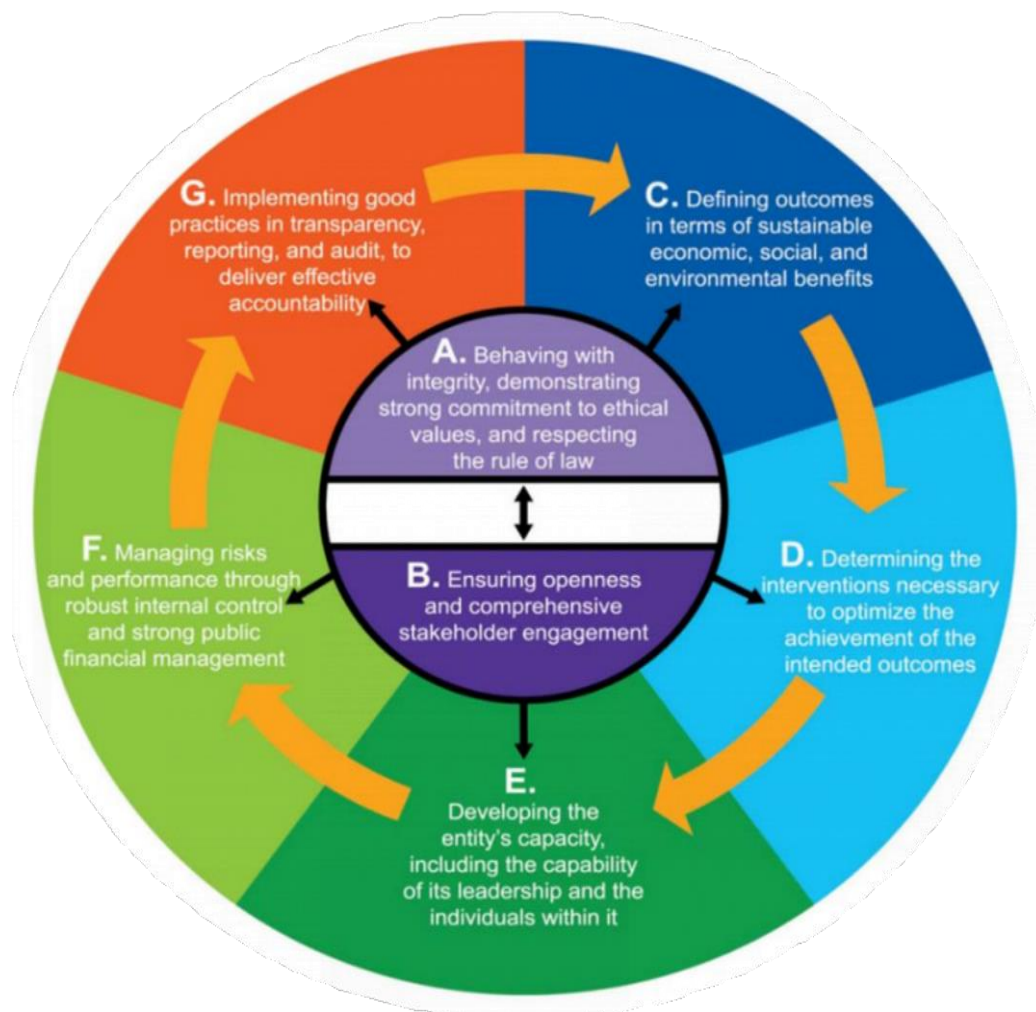


Introduction

Governance in the public sector can be described as the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are achieved while acting in the public interest at all times. In simple terms it is about:

How the Council operates to ensure it is doing the right things in the right way

Our governance arrangements are based on a series of principles*, as shown in the diagram below:



Source: CIPFA / SOLACE framework – *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government (2016)*

To explain this further:

Achieving the intended outcomes (doing the right thing) requires arrangements for:

- Being clear about what the Council wants to achieve for people, the environment and the economy

- Being clear about the actions needed to achieve the Council’s aims
- Making sure the Council has the skills, ability and money to achieve its’ aims
- Making sure the Council manages risks, budgets and performance
- Making sure that the Council operates in an open, accountable and transparent way

All of the above mean the Council needs to have in place ways to ensure the Council is acting in the public interest (doing it the right way). This means the Council needs to:

- Behave with integrity and demonstrate a strong commitment to ethical values and respect the rule of law
- Ensure the Council is open and engaged with our communities and stakeholders

As an example:

The Council’s One Coventry Plan is how we define the outcomes we are planning to achieve (Principle C)...



.....And in developing our plan we have engaged with people across the city using a variety of different methods (Principle A)



Our work is underpinned by the One Coventry Values (Principles A, E)



Our Local Code of Corporate Governance sets out our arrangements for meeting the principles, helping us to ensure that we deliver our intended outcomes and are accountable to those who live, work and visit Coventry. The law requires us to undertake an annual review to reflect on how well our governance arrangements have been operating in practice during the year and provide an opinion on this.

This is published in our Annual Governance Statement. The Statement also includes a plan of any actions we are taking to improve governance. The Council is committed to continuous improvement and we recognise that good governance is dynamic - as things change, the way in which we work needs to change as well to ensure that we can continue to do the right things in the right way.

The full Local Code of Governance for Coventry City Council is outlined in this document. The Code is reviewed every year and approved by the Audit and Procurement Committee to ensure its up-to-date and accurately reflects how the Council operates.

Principle A:

Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

1. Behaving with integrity

The Council has a Code of Conduct for Elected Members. The aim of the Code of Conduct is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of Elected Members, Co-opted Members and local government. It sets out general principles of behaviour expected of all Elected Members and Co-opted Members. It provides a guide to modelling the behaviour that is expected and covers standards including respect; bullying, harassment and discrimination; confidentiality and use of position as well as arrangements for declaring interests. Members receive training on the Code of Conduct.

There is a Code of Conduct in place for Employees which forms part of their terms and conditions of employment and is based on the Seven Principles of Public Life.

Our 'One Coventry Values' have been co-created with the support and input of all employees across the Council so they are reflective of how we want to be represented both as colleagues and to our wider communities. The One Coventry Values are "Open and Fair", "Nurture and Develop", "Engage and Empower", "Create and Innovate", "Own and Be Accountable" and "Value and Respect". Our People Plan sets out our HR ambitions for our workforce over the next three years and has our One Coventry Values at its centre.

2. Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values

The Council has an Ethics Committee who promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted members. The Ethics Committee monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for Elected and Co-opted Members, consider complaints made against Elected and Co-opted Members, and monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for employees.

There is a register of Interests for Members which can be viewed on the website. Officers are expected to declare financial and non-financial interests to their line manager and the Council undertakes an annual declarations of interest exercise in relation to all officers Grade 9 and above.

Gifts and hospitality are declared. The Ethics Committee review Members' and Officers' declarations of gifts and hospitality every 6 months. These are published as part of the Ethics Committee papers.

A Member Officer Protocol offers guidance on some of the issues which are commonly experienced between Members and Officers when working together. Officers and Members both serve the public, but they have different roles. Officers are employees of the Council and are politically neutral. Their role is to advise Members and implement the policies of the Council to the best of their abilities. Members are office holders and will often belong to a political party. They are obliged to exercise their own judgement in respect of matters before them but may also legitimately pursue party political objectives. Employees are answerable to the Chief Executive, not to individual Members (whatever office they hold), but there should be good communication between senior officers and Members with special responsibility for their area of work.

3. Respecting the Rule of Law

The Council's Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. The Council has three statutory posts who are responsible for ensuring the rule of law, as set out in the Constitution is applied – The Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer. There is a Monitoring Officer Protocol in place.

The Council has a Whistleblowing Policy. This enables employees to report concerns about wrongdoing which are in the public interest. This policy is important as it protects the individual who raised the concerns from suffering any detriment. There is also information on the staff intranet which advises employees how they can raise concerns about work (including Whistleblowing), entitled "I have a concern".

A Group Governance Agreement is in place which sets out the legal framework for the operation and management of Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd and its subsidiaries. Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd and the Council's Joint Venture companies are accountable to the Coventry Shareholder Committee which represents the interests of the Council as shareholder.

Principle B:

Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

1. Openness

Formal meetings are open to the public and information is displayed on our website. A weekly public notice is published and displayed at the Council House. Papers are published on the website five working days before a meeting and wherever possible, items are discussed in public. If items are discussed in private, a reason is given for this.

Key Decisions (those which involve financial implications of over £1m or impact substantially on two or more wards) are published.

Decisions taken by Cabinet and Member Committees are available on the website.

2. Engaging with citizens and stakeholders

The Council is aware that better outcomes and solutions are achieved through strong engagement between organisations, residents and communities. We aim to use different ways of connecting and working with residents to collectively identify priorities and co-produce actions so that better decisions are made.

The Council recognises the importance of partnership working, creating opportunities to solve problems and the importance of inclusive community engagement.

The Council engages with citizens/residents and stakeholders in a variety of ways both digitally and non-digitally. We publish a magazine, Citivision, which is delivered to every house in the city and includes news, views and features about the work of the Council and life in Coventry. The magazine includes information about how you can get in touch with your local councillors and reports on the many events taking place in the city.

The Let's Talk Coventry website is an online engagement platform designed for residents to engage with the Council. You can use it to take part in consultations, share ideas and join in with discussions. We also use the site to keep residents and stakeholders up to date with how your feedback has led to action from the council. All consultations and engagement opportunities are available in hard copies at our libraries. Posters are also displayed giving people a phone number to call to request information in different languages or different formats. Opportunities are also promoted through the many newsletters that are sent out from the Council as well as partner newsletters.

In the case of large-scale projects, leaflets/ "Street News" are produced and delivered to business and residential properties within a geographical location of proposed new developments/transport schemes. One off public

meetings/drop in sessions are also held.

Peer engagement is recommended working alongside Community Leaders in geographical or special interest groups to encourage involvement. The Council has a network of Community Messengers who share information with community and resident groups, as well as a Faith Compact. This is a joint commitment between faith communities and Coventry City Council to a set of principles that guide engagement, aiming to improve collaborative partnerships, and to promote open, practical working at all levels.

In addition, the Council engages with businesses within the City of Coventry to understand the barriers to entry in tendering for contract opportunities and how these barriers can be addressed through the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Principle C:

Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

1. Defining outcomes

The Council defines its outcomes in the One Coventry Plan – this is our strategic, corporate plan. The One Coventry Plan is focused on the needs and aspirations of our communities. It also contains the One Coventry Performance Framework which contains the targets we will be working to deliver. Members and senior officers regularly monitor how well the Council is delivering work towards meeting the targets. The Cabinet receive a report reviewing progress bi-annually toward targets, and an annual performance report reporting progress against performance indicators is published and discussed publicly.

2. Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

The One Coventry Plan focusses on economic, social and environmental benefits. The Plan is underpinned by a number of strategies which help us to deliver the plan. This includes the Medium Term Financial Strategy (which helps us to plan our spending over a three year period), the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Every decision-making report contains information on how the decision will impact on people and the environment. For significant policy changes full Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken.

The Council has a Social Value and Sustainability Policy. This means that we look at maximising the wider benefit for our city through meeting our needs when we purchase goods, services or works in a way that achieves value for money for the life of the contract. This means that whilst the cost of the contract is important we also look at what else can be gained – for example, apprenticeship opportunities or environmentally friendly working practices.

Principle D:

Determining the interventions necessary to optimize the achievement of the intended outcomes

1. Identifying the right course of action

Decision making reports contain information on the options considered which includes outlining the impact of doing nothing. Financial and legal implications are explained, and the reports contain information on how the work contributes to the One Coventry Plan as well as how risks are managed. The report also includes information on the impact on equalities, including the identification of any groups that the decision may have an impact on (including a positive impact) and how any potential adverse impacts on groups will be mitigated. The implications of decisions on climate change, the environment and partners are also outlined in decision making reports.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) brings together evidence about the health and wellbeing of Coventry residents to help inform the right course of action. This information is used by the Council and health partners to enable us to work together to improve the health and wellbeing of Coventry residents.

There are Procurement Boards and Panels who use the information provided to make informed decisions when we purchase goods and services. This includes considering the Social Value and Sustainability Policy when procuring goods, services or works.

The One Coventry Policy Forum has been established to provide a collaborative approach, to work to ensure they are complementary. This includes peer challenge and oversight of policies across the Council. This helps to ensure we are working as One Coventry to identify the right course of action to collectively achieve our objectives.

2. Planning action

The Council has a One Coventry Plan Performance Management Framework which helps us ensure we achieve what we aim to do. It does so by setting out how we plan and organise our resources to achieve the things we want to do – our vision and priorities, as set out in the One Coventry Plan. By aligning our resources, actions and activities to the Council's vision, priorities and desired outcomes, it helps us measure how public money is turned into results. The One Coventry performance monitoring tool identifies areas of focus to ensure resource is appropriately targeted against need.

3. Maximising outcomes

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out how we plan to manage our finances for the next three years and how we can closely align resources to the priorities set in the One Coventry Plan. This plan is

refreshed annually and considered by Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council.

Principle E:

Developing the Council's capacity including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

1. Developing capacity

Our People Plan outlines what we as a Council and a responsible employer are going to do to deliver the workforce vision and objectives, particularly around organisational design, development and leadership. The People Plan details how we intend to improve capacity, capability and processes to deliver the Council's priorities.

The Council recognises the importance of partnerships in developing capacity in our city. This can be seen through the introduction of a Director of Partnerships and Performance at the Council. The One Coventry Partnership aims to facilitate and grow cross organisational working with partner organisations such as the Universities, West Midlands Police and voluntary and community sector partners. The Partnership is chaired by the Director of Partnerships and Performance to improve outcomes through more joined up and relevant local services.

We are also part of the Coventry and Warwickshire Anchor Alliance, working collaboratively with other organisations to make the biggest positive impact on the lives of local people.

Anchor institutions are large organisations based in the City who have a significant stake in the area – this includes NHS Organisations, Universities and large employers.

2. Developing strong leaders

The Council has a Members Training and Development Strategy which is designed to ensure our Members are properly supported to help them meet the demands of the role. Members need the skills and knowledge to be able to deliver Coventry's ambitions. A well-trained and informed cohort of Members is key to the success of the One Coventry Plan. The strategy provides the framework for Members to access a programme of training that meets their needs, as well as the needs of the organisation to deliver the ambition set out in the One Coventry Plan. The strategy will help to continue to support the development of a training culture for Members. Delivery of the strategy is overseen by a Cabinet Member Advisory Panel, which has cross-party representation and makes recommendations to the Cabinet Member responsible for Member training.

The Council has a Corporate Learning and Development offer in place which is centered around embedding diversity, equity & inclusion and also includes a strand on leadership and management development. Strengthening the leadership and management capability of our workforce will enable us to address some of the challenges we face as an organisation and will put us in a better position to deliver our 'One

Coventry' priorities through our One Coventry Plan.

Principle F:

Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

1. Managing risk

The Risk Management Policy sets out the mechanisms for the identification and management of risks in the Council. This includes requirements for both service and directorate registers to be maintained and when a risk should be reported to the Leadership Team, so that they can consider if it should be included in the Corporate Risk Register. The Corporate Risk Register contains those risks which threaten the achievement of One Coventry priorities, and it is kept under review by the Leadership Team and the Audit and Procurement Committee. In addition, risk registers are maintained for significant projects the Council is working on and all decision-making reports must explain how risks will be managed.

2. Managing performance

Performance against the One Coventry Performance Management Framework is reported to Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council.

The Council has six scrutiny boards which are responsible for keeping a check on decisions and how they are made. They help to provide transparency and enable decisions and policy to be challenged. Scrutiny plays a part in developing Council policy, reviewing Council Services, and making sure the Council is acting effectively and efficiently. Scrutiny meetings are open to the public and welcome suggestions and comments from the public on items to scrutinise.

Performance management takes place across the organisation. There are a number of Officer groups at which performance is discussed in different levels of details. This includes the Leadership Board (LB.).

There is an effective appraisal framework in place for our employees who have an appraisal which considers their performance, targets and development needs every year [As part of the appraisal process all senior leaders are set a diversity & inclusion objective which is monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.](#)

Performance management of the Council's subsidiaries is undertaken by Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd who are accountable to a Shareholder Committee.

3. Robust internal control

Officers are responsible for implementing appropriate systems of internal control to manage risks within their services. The Council's Internal Audit Service are responsible for providing independent assurance that internal control processes are operating effectively and advising on actions to improve systems and processes where necessary. The Internal Audit Charter defines the purpose, authority, responsibility and position of Internal Audit within the Council.

The Council has a Fraud and Corruption Strategy which sets out the Council's arrangements for responding to the risk of fraud and corruption.

The Council has an Audit and Procurement Committee who ensure there is sufficient assurance over governance, risk and internal control and oversee the work of Internal Audit.

4. Managing data

The Council's information governance framework ensures that personal information is held and processed in a confidential and secure manner while ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements. Key roles have been identified to ensure appropriate oversight and accountability. A corporate information risk register has been developed for regular review by the Information Management Strategy Group, which is chaired by the Senior Information Risk Officer. Guidelines and training are in place to support the safe collection, storage and use of data and a reporting system is in place to identify data incidents which are investigated and used to identify lessons learned. Information about incidents and near misses are reported annually to the Audit and Procurement Committee.

5. Strong financial management

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the financial planning foundations that support the setting of the Council's revenue and capital budgets and the Constitution sets out the budget and policy framework procedure rules, financial procedure rules, and rules for contracts. Budgetary control arrangements are in place including defined responsibilities of budget holders and budget managers.

Quarterly financial monitoring reports are presented to Cabinet and Audit and Procurement Committee, along with out-turn reports. An annual assessment is undertaken of both the Council's compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code, which provides guidance for effective and sustainable financial management in local authorities and the role of the S151 Officer (The Chief Operating Officer) against the CIPFA Statement of the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government.

Principle G:

Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

1. Implementing good practice in transparency

The Council is working towards compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code, which sets out which information we should be publishing and the timeframe for doing so.

Our report templates are standardised and designed to make sure that it is clear why a decision has been taken and that the appropriate information is provided to explain the decision. The reports and minutes of meetings are published and meetings are open to the public.

2. Implementing good practices in reporting

We report our performance annually through the One Coventry Performance Report and review every 6 months with stakeholders to provide assurance of collective progress against targets and identify areas requiring focus, This is available on our website.

We compile our Statement of Accounts on an annual basis. The Statement of Accounts gives residents and other interested parties clear information about the Council's finances and operational and financial performance. The statement summarises; the cost of services provided by us in the year; how services were paid for and our assets and liabilities at the year end. The Statement of Accounts is available on our website. The Council's External Auditors assess the Council's arrangements for providing value for money as part of their audit on the Statement of Accounts.

The Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd Board provide the Shareholder Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee with a summary of the activities and financial performance of Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd Group over the preceding year.

3. Assurance and effective accountability

The Council is subject to a number of external reviews and inspections including OFSTED and CQC, as well as external audit. The outcomes of these inspections and reviews are published. Governance and oversight of these reviews and inspections are undertaken through the local authority.

Services participate in peer reviews which are designed to support the council's performance by identifying its areas of strength and areas for development. An LGA Peer Challenge was undertaken in January 2024. Learning from this Peer Challenge is being used to develop action plans across the organisation that will be monitored by Cabinet Members in their regular briefings with Directors and by the Leadership Board. The LGA peer challenge team will be invited back to look at progress made against these action plans.

Improvement plans are developed and monitored to implement recommendations from reviews and inspections and this is overseen by Cabinet Members in their regular briefings with Directors and by the Leadership Board..

The Council has an Audit and Procurement Committee who ensure that there is sufficient assurance over governance, risk and control within the Council. They also monitor the implementation of internal audit and external audit recommendations.

The Council produces an Annual Governance Statement which provides accountability to stakeholders on how well it has delivered on governance over the course of the previous year.



Public Report

Ethics Committee
Council

27 June 2024
09 July 2024

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A - Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Law and Governance

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title: Annual Report of Ethics Committee 2023-24

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary

This report forms the eighth annual report of the Ethics Committee, setting out the work of the Committee over the last municipal year. In particular, it reports on:

- Update on the Online Safety Bill (now enacted Online Safety Act 2023)
- The Committee's review of the Local Code of Corporate Governance
- Civility in Public Life, Intimidation in Public and Digital Citizenship
- Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report

The report also details other, regular work of the Committee over the last year and sets out a brief overview of work to be undertaken in the 2024/25 municipal year. The Committee is asked to approve the report and recommend to Council that it notes the report and considers whether there is any work that it would wish the Committee to undertake.

Recommendations:

The Ethics Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Approve the Annual Report of the Committee; and
- (2) Recommend that Council notes the Annual Report and considers whether there is any work within the Committee's terms of reference that Council would wish the Committee to undertake.

Council is recommended to:

- (1) Note the Annual Report of the Ethics Committee; and
- (2) Consider whether there is any work within the Committee's terms of reference that Council would wish the Committee to undertake.

List of Appendices included:

None.

Other useful background papers can be found at the following web addresses:

None.

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No.

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No.

Will this report go to Council?

Yes – 09 July 2024.

Report title: Annual Report of Ethics Committee 2023/24

1. Context (or background)

1.1 The Council's Ethics Committee was established in 2012 following the introduction of new duties and responsibilities regarding ethical conduct in the Localism Act 2011. The Council as a whole has a legal duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members of the authority. The Ethics Committee, through its work, assists in discharging this statutory duty.

1.2 The terms of reference of Ethics Committee also include:

- (a) Making recommendations to the Council on the appointment of "independent persons" under the Localism Act 2011;
- (b) Approving and revising the Complaints Protocol which will set out the detailed procedures for considering complaints made against Elected and Co-opted Members under the Code of Conduct for Elected and Co-opted Members;
- (c) Considering complaints made against Elected and Co-opted Members under the Code of Conduct for Elected and Co-opted Members in accordance with the Complaints Protocol;
- (d) Monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct for Elected and Co-opted Members and making appropriate recommendations to the relevant body;
- (e) At the request of the Member or co-opted Member concerned, reviewing any decision of the Monitoring Officer not to grant a dispensation in relation to disclosable pecuniary interests in accordance with Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011;
- (f) Monitoring the operation of the Code of Conduct for Employees and making appropriate recommendations to the relevant body;
- (g) Considering complaints made against Elected Members of Finham Parish Council, Keresley Parish Council and Allesley Parish Council under the relevant Parish Council's Code of Conduct for Elected Members in accordance with the City Council's Complaints Protocol; and
- (h) Considering any other matters which are relevant to the ethical governance of the Council, its Members or Employees.

1.3 The Committee approves a work programme for each year which includes regular reports as well as one off pieces of work. At its meeting in March 2017, the Committee agreed that in future it would submit an annual report to Council setting out the work that it has accomplished in the past year. This report comprises the eighth Annual Report of the Ethics Committee.

2. The Annual Report and Recommended Proposal

2.1 About the Committee

In the municipal year 2023/24 Ethics Committee comprised five Councillors. The membership of the Committee was Cllr Nazir (Chair), Cllr Bigham, Cllr Hetherton, Cllr Reeves and Cllr Welsh. It is regrettable that Members of the Conservative Group decided not to take up their allocated place and be a part of the Committee. There were three named substitutes, Cllrs Gray, Mutton and Seaman. Although not Members of the Committee, the four Independent Persons appointed by the Council are encouraged to attend the meetings where possible. The Committee held four scheduled meetings in 2023/24 (in June 2023, September 2023, December 2023 and March 2024). All meeting were held in person.

2.2 Code of Conduct Complaints

The Council received a total of 10 new formal complaints against Councillors in the municipal year 2023/24. 5 complaints were recommended for no further action (at Stage One).

The Council received 6 complaints since the date of the last meeting (21 March 2024) as at the date this report was written. 4 are ongoing. In 2 no further action has been taken.

2.3 Online Safety Bill Update – now enacted Online Safety Act 2023

The Committee continued to review the progress of the Online Safety Bill at its June 2023 meeting. The Local Government Association (LGA) issued a press release in April 2023. While the LGA confirmed that they support the overall aims of the Bill, they called for the Government to include stronger provisions to protect Councillors from online abuse amid the increase in online intimidation. In October 2023, the Online Safety Act 2023 was passed bringing into force the legislation online safety.

2.4 Local Code of Corporate Governance

At its June 2023 meeting, the Committee considered the updated Local Code of Corporate Governance. The Council adopted a Code in 2017 which provides the arrangement for how the Authority will satisfy the principle of good governance. This updated version reflects the Council's current arrangements within governance.

2.5 Civility in Public Life, Intimidation in Public Life and Digital Citizenship

The Local Government Association (LGA) has been coordinating a programme of work entitled “Civility in Public Life”. This work is in response to the increasing concern about intimidation and toxicity of debate and the impact this has been having on democratic processes.

To support this work the LGA has now started to develop a range of guidance and tools to support Councillors and candidates in their online communications (also known as their “Digital Citizenship”) as it is now recognised that online communication is intrinsic to democratic engagement.

The Ethics Committee has been closely monitoring the work of the LGA and considering how that work can be adopted as a local response to promote Civility in Public Life and Digital Citizenship.

The Committee has also maintained a watching brief on work being undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life and locally on supporting Members in dealing with challenges associated with public service, particularly in relation to intimidation and abuse. The Committee were advised of work undertaken to support Councillors, including training, the availability of counselling services, protocols in place and work undertaken with the Police.

2.6 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report

The Committee noted the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report. If a case of maladministration had been found by the Ombudsman, this would be formally reported to the Committee.

The Committee recognised the importance of ensuring that the Council complies with its Public Sector Equality Duty and requested that their comments that appropriate training is provided to all staff be fed back to the Council’s Leadership Team.

2.7 Other Work

The Committee received an update on Members training during 2023/24 and supported the continuing delivery of the Members Training and Development Strategy, including actions for 2024-25.

The Committee has continued to receive regular reports on ethical standards cases across the country, where these have been available.

2.8 Work Programme for 2024/25

Apart from regular reports on, among other things, Code of Conduct complaints, updates from the Monitoring Officer and officer and Member gifts and hospitality, this year the Committee is looking at work in the following areas:

- Consideration of the self-assessment Toolkit to aid Councillors in dealing with abuse, harassment and intimidation as part of the Debate not Hate: Ending Abuse in Public Life Campaign.

The Committee will also maintain a watching brief on any legislative changes arising from the Committee on Standards in Public Life's report and recommendations of January 2019.

2.9 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:-

- (1) Approve the Annual Report of the Committee; and
- (2) Recommend that Council notes the Annual Report and to consider whether there is any work within the Committee's terms of reference that Council would wish the Committee to undertake.

Council is recommended to:

- (1) Note the Annual Report of the Ethics Committee; and
- (2) Consider whether there is any work within the Committee's terms of reference that Council would wish the Committee to undertake.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1** There has been no consultation as there is no proposal to implement at this stage which would require a consultation.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

Not applicable.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

5.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. The issues referred to in this report will assist the Council in complying with its obligations under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011.

6 Other implications

None.

6.1 How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?

Not applicable.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is no direct risk to the organisation as a result of the contents of this report.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

No direct impact at this stage.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There are no public sector equality duties which are of relevance at this stage.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None at this stage.

Report author(s):

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Directorate: Law and Governance

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

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Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Richard Shirley	Lead Accountant	Finance	03/06/24	03/06/24
Legal: Julie Newman	Director of Law and Governance	Law and Governance	03/06/24	03/04/24
Councillor S Nazir	Chair of Ethics Committee		10/06/24	12/06/24

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Public Report Ethics Committee

Ethics Committee

27 June 2024

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A - Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Law and Governance

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title: Code of Conduct Update

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary

The report updates the Ethics Committee on any national issues in relation to the ethical behaviour of elected Members and the local position in Coventry with regard to Code of Conduct issues.

Recommendations:-

The Ethics Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the position with regard to matter concerning local authorities nationally; and
2. Note the local position relating to the operation of the Council's Code of Conduct and to delegate any actions arising from these to the Director of Law and Governance, following consultation with the Chair of Ethics Committee.

List of Appendices included

None

Other useful background papers

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Code of Conduct Update

1. Context (or background)

1.1 The Council's Ethics Committee has agreed that the Director of Law and Governance will provide a regulate update on cases relating to the Members' Code of Conduct on a national basis. This is to facilitate the Ethics Committee's role in assisting the Council with its duties under Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of Members conduct.

1.2 The National Picture

1.2.1 Former Councillor V, Bristol City Council

A Bristol City Councillor was disqualified within a month of having been elected after it was revealed that Councillor V was employed by the Council as a teacher for a primary school. A person is disqualified from being elected if they hold paid employment for the same Local Authority under the Local Government Act 1972. The former Councillor, who appeared to be unaware of this provision said, "it is a great shame that this did not come to light earlier in the process".

1.2.2 Councillor T, Tendring District Council

Councillor T was found to be in breach of the Councillors' Code of Conduct for Tendring District Council. Complaints were made about the behaviour of the Councillor at two Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group meetings, which were held virtually.

During one meeting it was alleged that Councillor T embarked on a "wholly inappropriate and disrespectful verbal attack" of an officer for the Environment Agency.

On the second occasion, Councillor T was accused of constantly interrupting and of overbearing behaviour. A Councillor complained Councillor T making racist and offensive remarks towards people of Afro-Caribbean descent by implying "that members of the community were unable or unwilling to learn how to float". It was further alleged that comments were made by Councillor T, which indicated that the clothing that "people of specific faiths wear when in the sea" is inappropriate.

An external investigator was appointed and determined that Councillor T was found to have infringed the Code on four counts with the remarks "made out of ignorance rather than malice and that his language was clumsy and patronising rather than being rooted in what might be described as out-and-out racism".

Tendring's District Council's Standards Committee reviewed the complaints. In finding the Code of Conduct breached it was concluded that Councillor T failed to treat others with respect. This included representatives and employees of partner organisations, Councillors and employees of the Council. Further, Councillor T was found to have brought their role and the District Council into disrepute.

The Committee heard of Councillor T's resignation from the Special Interest Group and offer of apology at the time the complaint was received. However, owing to the divergence in opinion on the manner of debate between Councillor T and the Complainant, the Council's Monitoring Officer did not consider it appropriate to resolve the matter informally.

As part of Councillor T's response, it was stated that they were, "intent on highlighting perceived barriers to swimming education and facilities, rather than intending to make derogatory remarks."

The Standards Committee did not find there to be "conscious discriminatory intent by the words used".

Sanctions against Councillor T included the findings being published on the Council's website, reported to Full Council and training was arranged for the Councillor. Councillor T was told that they should apologise to the Council and the Special Interest Group and that until the apology is issued, and the training attended, Councillor T should not be allowed to return any committees or external bodies.

1.2.3 Councillor D, Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council

A Councillor for Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council has been deemed to have breached their Members' Code of Conduct following an independent report. Complaints about Councillor D's conduct were received from the Council's Clerk (at the time), Parish Councillors and a member of the public.

Upon the matter being referred to Newcastle-under-Lyme, the Monitoring Officer commissioned specialist employment lawyers to investigate.

The report found that Councillor D was in breach for "failing to show respect for others", "bullying and harassing" the Council's clerk (at the time) and "bringing the Parish Council into disrepute".

The Borough Council's Audit and Standards Hearing Panel considered the report and agreed with the findings. The Panel recommended that the Councillor be removed from positions of responsibility and external appointments held in their role, and that the Parish Council formally censure Councillor D.

1.2.4 Code of Conduct Investigations Costs, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

Following a Code of Conduct investigation into the previously mentioned Councillor D, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council issued Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council with a £23,865 invoice to cover the costs of the investigation. Such costs typically rest with the relevant principal authority responsible for handling such complaints and was in excess of the Parish Council's reserves. The Parish Council considered the bill at their meeting and expressed their concerns. The Chair liaised with Newcastle Borough Council to challenge legal basis of the bill. It was subsequently withdrawn.

1.3 The Local Picture

Complaints under the Code of Conduct

- 1.3.1** The Ethics Committee has requested that the Director of Law and Governance reports regularly on any complaints received relating to Members of Coventry City Council.
- 1.3.2** The Director of Law and Governance has received 6 complaints since the date of the last meeting (21 March 2024) as at the date this report was written. 3 complaints have been dealt with informally the other complaints are currently being considered at Stage 1 of the complaints process.
- 1.3.3** The Director of Law and Governance will update the Committee on any further complaints received before the meeting and progress on those already received.
- 1.3.4** All complaints are handled in accordance with the agreed Complaints Protocol. No findings have been made by the Local Government Ombudsman in relation to Members of Coventry City Council.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

The Ethics Committee are recommended to:

- 1. Note the position with regard to matters concerning local authorities nationally; and
- 2. Note the local position relating to the operation of Council's Code of Conduct and to delegate any actions arising from these to the Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Chair of the Ethics Committee.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

Not applicable.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

Not applicable

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

5.2 Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. The issues referred to in this report will assist the Council in complying with its obligations under Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011.

6. Other implications

None.

6.1 How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan

Not applicable.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is no direct risk to the organisation as a result of the contents of this report.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

No direct impact at this stage.

6.4 Equalities/ EIA

There are no public sector equality duties which are of relevance at this stage.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None at this stage.

Report author(s):

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Directorate: Law and Governance

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Suzanne Bennett	Governance Services Officer	Law and Governance	11/06/24	11/06/24
Shanita Manhertz	Trainee Solicitor	Law and Governance	10/06/24	10/06/24
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Richard Shirley	Lead Accountant	Finance	10/06/24	10/06/24
Legal: Julie Newman	Director of Law and Governance	Law and Governance	10/06/24	10/06/24
Councillor S Nazir	Chair of Ethics Committee		10/06/24	12/06/24

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Ethics Committee

27 June 2024

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A- Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Law and Governance

Ward(s) affected:

Not applicable

Title:

Work Programme for the Ethics Committee 2024/25

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

This report proposes areas of work for the Ethics Committee for the Municipal Year 2024/25. The Committee is asked to consider the proposed Work Programme and make any suggestions for additional or alternative reports.

Recommendations:

The Ethics Committee is recommended to review the proposed Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and make any changes or amendments the Committee considers appropriate.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 - Proposed Work Programme

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Work Programme for the Ethics Committee 2024/25

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Committee's Terms of Reference are set out in the Council's Constitution and include the consideration of matters which are relevant to the ethical governance of the Council, its Members or employees. This report attaches a proposed programme of work for the Committee, designed to assist the Committee to meet its objectives set out in the Terms of Reference, and to ensure that the Council complies with its obligations under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst elected and co-opted members.
- 1.2 The Committee's proposed Work Programme takes account of the need to promote standards and addresses this in a number of ways. It is a draft Work Programme and is flexible in terms of suggestions from members of the Ethics Committee as to additional or substitute areas which they would want to consider and receive reports on.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The Work Programme includes regular items on:
 - Code of Conduct/ Monitoring Officer Update
 - Declarations of gifts and hospitality by Members and Officers
 - Annual report to full Council
 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Report
- 2.2 In addition, the Ethics Committee factor into the Work Programme a number of matters where work is being, or about to be, undertaken across the Council. This includes continuing work on Civility in Public Life and the provision of training for Members.
- 2.3 The Committee is asked to consider whether there are any other matters that they would want to consider during the year.

2.4 Recommendation

The Ethics Committee is recommended to review the proposed Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and make any changes or amendments the Committee considers appropriate.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

None

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 Not applicable

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

5.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report, as there is no statutory obligation on the Committee to adopt a Work Programme. However, the Council must comply with its obligations under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 and the continuation of a clear programme of work would assist in compliance for the Council as a whole, in its duty to promote high standards of ethical conduct.

6. Other implications

None

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the One Coventry Plan?

Not applicable.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is no direct risk to the organisation as a result of the contents of this report.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

If implemented, the Work Programme will facilitate the promotion of high standards amongst elected members in accordance with the Localism Act.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There are no public sector equality duties which are of relevance at this stage.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None at this stage

Report author(s):

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Directorate: Law and Governance

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

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Shanita Manhertz	Trainee Solicitor	Law and Governance	23/05/24	23/05/24
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and Members)				
Director : Julie Newman	Director of Law and Governance	Law and Governance	23/05/24	29/05/24
Finance: Richard Shipley	Lead Accountant	Finance	23/05/24	23/05/24
Cllr S Nazir	Chair: Ethics Committee		11/06/24	12/06/24

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Appendix 1

Proposed Work Programme for the Ethics Committee - Municipal Year 2024/25

Ethics Committee Meeting and date	Topics
2024/5	
1. 27 June, 2024	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update
	Annual Report of the Committee
	Work Programme 2024/25
	Local Code of Corporate Governance
2. 26 September 2024	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update
	Officers Gifts and Hospitality -Inspection of Registers for first 6 months of 2024
	Members Gifts and Hospitality -Declarations for first 6 months of 2024
	Ending Abuse in Public Life – Council's Self Assessment and Toolkit
	Work Programme 2024/25
3. 12 December 2024	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update
	Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report
	Work Programme 2024/25
4. 20 March 2025	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.
	Update on Members Training
	Officers Gifts and Hospitality -Inspection of Registers for last 6 months of 2024
	Work Programme 2024/25