
29th August 2014

Name of Cabinet Member:

Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Executive Director, Resources

Ward(s) affected:

Not applicable

Title:

Work programme for the Ethics Committee

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

At its meeting on 20th February 2014, the Ethics Committee approved a work programme for the new Municipal Year 2014-15. This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to review the work programme and make any changes/amendments.

Recommendations:

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

List of Appendices included:

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: Draft Work Programme

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Committee met and approved the work programme for 2014/2015 at its last meeting on 20th February 2014.
- 1.2 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 the approved programme of work for the Committee, designed to assist the Committee meet its objectives set out in the Terms of Reference and ensure 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.
- 1.3 First there is a standing item for each meeting, by way of a Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct update, which will incorporate a review of complaints to date and an update on any national issues on the subject of elected member conduct which may be of interest. This is flexible and can cover additional areas which the Committee is particularly concerned about, as they arise.
- 1.5 Secondly it was also agreed that the Ethics Committee have an overview of Gifts and Hospitality for both officers and members, in order that it may review how the two Codes of Conduct are working on a day to day basis, and suggest improved or different practices as it may consider to be appropriate. A separate report is being brought to this meeting which suggests a new form for members to complete for offers of Gifts and Hospitality, as well as draft guidance to assist members when considering the issue. The work programme includes an item on Officer Gifts and Hospitality for the next meeting of the Committee
- 1.6 Finally, items have been included to ensure a review of the position of the parish councils, a review of the Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and, a review of any Annual Report from the Committee on Standards in Public Life later this year.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

The Committee is asked to consider the work programme and agree its contents together with any other recommendations.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

None

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 Not Applicable

5. Comments from Executive Director, Resources

- 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 Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

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) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None at this stage

Report author(s): Christine Forde

Name and job title: City Solicitor and Assistant Director, Legal and Democratic Services

Directorate: Resources

Tel and email contact: 02476 831587 christine.forde@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

| Contributor/approver name | Title | Directorate or organisation | Date doc sent out | Date response received or approved |
|--|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Contributors: | | | | |
| Gurdip Paddan | Governance Services Officer | Resources | 18.08.14 | 20.08.14 |
| Christine Goodwin | Senior Lawyer, Place and Regulatory Team | Resources | 29.5.14 | 29.5.14 |
| Other members | | | | |
| Adrian West | Members and Elections Team Manager | Resources | 11.08.14 | 11.08.14 |
| Helen Lynch | Place and Regulatory Team Manager | Resources | 11.08.14 | 12.08.14 |
| Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members) | | | | |
| Finance: Melanie Thornton | Finance | Resources | 18.8.14 | 18.8.14 |
| Legal: Christine Forde | Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services | Resources | 18.8.14 | 19.8.14 |
| Director: Christine Forde (on behalf of Chris West) | Executive Director Resources | Resources | 18.8.14 | 19.8.14 |
| Members: Councillor Hetheron | Chair of Ethics Committee | | 20.8.14 | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

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

Appendix

Work Programme for the Municipal year 2014/2015

| Meeting no. and date | Topics | Verbal or written | Lead officer |
|--|--|-------------------|-----------------|
| 2014/2015 | | | |
| 1. 20th June (cancelled) | | | |
| 2. 29th August | Gifts and Hospitality for Members- review of declarations made so far in 2014-15 | Written | Christine Forde |
| | Adoption/Review of Ethics Committee Work Programme for 2014/15, consideration of training needs for Ethics Committee Members | Written | Christine Forde |
| | Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct / Member Complaints Update | Written | Christine Forde |
| 3. 19th December | Officers Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for first 6 months of 2014/2015 | Written | Christine Forde |
| | 6 monthly review of Register of DPIs and Parish compliance with Localism Act 2011 | Written | Christine Forde |
| | Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct / members Complaints Update/ consideration of training needs of elected members on ethical standards issues | Written | Christine Forde |
| | Code of Conduct for Employees- review of its operation over the last 12 months and any review recommendations | Written | Christine Forde |
| | Standards in Public Life- update from national body usually published in August each year | Written | Christine Forde |
| 4. 27th March | Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ members Complaints Update | Written | Christine Forde |