
Ethics Committee

15 July 2016

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A- Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Executive Director of Resources

Ward(s) affected:

Not applicable

Title:

Work programme for the Ethics Committee 2016/17

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

This report suggests areas of work for the Ethics Committee for the Municipal Year 2016/17. The Committee is asked to consider the draft work programme and make any suggestions for additional or alternative reports.

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'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 draft 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. However, certain items have been included which will help the Committee focus on its key aim to promote high standards of conduct for all members and employees of the Council.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 First it is proposed that there should continue to be 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.
- 2.2 Secondly it is suggested that the Ethics Committee continue to review declarations of Gifts and Hospitality by both officers and members at six monthly intervals. This will assist the Committee in reviewing how the two Codes of Conduct are working a day to day basis. A report has been produced for the first meeting of the Committee to consider proposals to review and update the section in the Employees' Code of Conduct on gifts and hospitality.
- 2.3 Thirdly, items have been included to ensure an annual 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. A separate item has been included for the second meeting of the new municipal year to consider reviewing the Code of Conduct Complaints Protocol in the light of recent experience of applying the Protocol (in particular Stage 2 of the Protocol) which has highlighted areas where the protocol could be improved/clarified. An item has been included for the September meeting on the recruitment of Independent Persons.
- 2.4 Other items that may be included in the work programme as when appropriate include consideration of the proposed Solace Code of Ethics for senior employees and consideration of the revised Whistleblowing Policy.
- 2.5 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

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Appendix

Work Programme for the Municipal year 2016/2017

Meeting date	Topics	Verbal or written	Lead officer
15 July 2016			
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Six monthly review of Register of DPs.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Review of Gifts and Hospitality Section of Employee Code of Conduct	Written	Helen Lynch
16 September 2016			
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Review of Complaints Protocol	Written	Helen Lynch
	Officers Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for first 6 months of 2016.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Members Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for first 6 months of 2016.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Recruitment of Independent Persons	Written	Helen Lynch
9 December 2016			
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Standards in Public Life- update from national body usually published in August each year.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Annual review of Parish Councils ethical standards regime.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Six monthly review of Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.	Written	Helen Lynch
17 March 2016			
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.	Written	Helen Lynch

	Officers Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for last 6 months of 2016.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Members Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for last 6 months of 2016.	Written	Helen Lynch