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Ethics Committee

17<sup>th</sup> March 2017

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

N/A- Ethics Committee

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

**Ward(s) affected:**

**Not applicable**

**Title:**

Work Programme for the Ethics Committee 2017/18

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

This report suggests areas of work for the Ethics Committee for the Municipal Year 2017/18. 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 2017/18**

### **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.
- 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. Separate items have been included concerning the review of the Complaints Protocol and the production of a Member Officer Protocol and a Monitoring Officer Protocol.
- 2.4 Finally, it is recommended that the Committee considers producing an annual report on its activities during the previous municipal year. It is recommended that the annual report is considered by the Committee at its first meeting of the year with a view to it being considered at the first available Council meeting. The report would help to highlight the work of the Committee and ensure that ethical standards have a high profile within the Council.
- 2.4 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 Director of Finance and Corporate Services**

##### **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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Legal: Helen Lynch	Legal Services Manager Place and Regulatory	Place	02.03.17	02.03.17
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## Appendix 1

### Work Programme for the Municipal year 2017/2018

Meeting no. and date	Topics	Verbal or written	Lead officer
<b>2017/18</b>			
<b>1. July 2017</b>			
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Annual Report of the Committee	Written	Helen Lynch
	Six monthly review of Register of DPs.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Member /Officer Protocol	Written	Helen Lynch
<b>2. September 2017</b>			
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Officers Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for first 6 months of 2017.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Members Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for first 6 months of 2017.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Monitoring Officer Protocol	Written	Helen Lynch
<b>3. December 2017</b>			
	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
<b>4. March 2018</b>			
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.	Written	Helen Lynch

	Officers Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for last 6 months of 2017.	Written	Helen Lynch
	Members Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for last 6 months of 2017.	Written	Helen Lynch