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Ethics Committee

5 April 2022

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

N/A- Ethics Committee

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Director of Finance

**Ward(s) affected:**

**Not applicable**

**Title:**

Work Programme for the Ethics Committee 2022/23

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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 2022/23. 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:**

Draft 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 for the Ethics Committee 2022/23**

### **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.

### **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 The Work Programme includes regular items on:

- Code of Conduct/ Monitoring Officer Update
- Annual report on Parish Councils
- Declarations of gifts and hospitality by Members and officers
- Annual report to full Council
- CSPL annual report
- Local Ombudsman's annual report

- 2.2 In addition it is suggested that the Ethics Committee factor into the Work Programme a number of matters where work is being, or about to be, undertaken across the Council, namely:

- Monitoring and responding to the Government's recent response (March 2022) to the Committee on Standards in Public Life's Report, dating from 2019
- Monitoring, and responding to, the Local Government Association's work on Civility in Public Life and Digital Citizenship.
- The work of a Member/officer group which is developing a local response to the LGA's guidance on intimidation in public life

Officers will also monitor and report on any Central Government response (which remains outstanding as of the date of this report), legislative changes arising from the CSPL's report and / or recommendations of January 2019.

### **2.3 Recommendation**

The Ethics Committee is recommended to review the 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 Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and 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 Council's 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

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**Directorate:** Law and Governance

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## Appendix 1

### Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2022/23

Meeting no. and date	Topics
<b>2022/3</b>	
<b>1. July 2022</b>	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update
	Annual Report of the Committee
	Annual Report on Parish Councils
	Work Programme 2022/23
	Report on the March 2022 Government response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life Report, 2019
<b>2. September 2022</b>	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update
	Officers Gifts and Hospitality -Inspection of Registers for first 6 months of 2022
	Members Gifts and Hospitality -Declarations for first 6 months of 2022
	Civility in Public Life and Digital Citizenship Review
	Work Programme 2022/23
<b>3. December 2022</b>	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.
	Local Government Ombudsman Annual Report
	Committee on Standards in Public Life Annual Report
	Work Programme 2022/23
<b>4. March 2023</b>	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.
	Officers Gifts and Hospitality -Inspection of Registers for last 6 months of 2022
	Members Gifts and Hospitality -Declarations for last 6 months of 2022
	Work Programme 2023/24