

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Ethics Committee held at 11.00 am on Thursday,**  
**26 September 2024**

Present:

Members:                           Councillor S Nazir (Chair)  
  Councillor N Akhtar  
  Councillor L Bigham  
  Councillor G Lloyd (substitute for Councillor P Hetherton)  
  Councillor E M Reeves

Independent Persons:         S Atkinson  
  P Wiseman

Employees (by Service Area):

Law and Governance:         J Newman (Director of Law and Governance),  
  C Sinclair

Apologies:                       Councillor P Hetherton  
  R Wills (Independent Person)

## **Public Business**

### **8.       Declarations of Interest**

There were no declaration of interest.

### **9.       Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 June 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

#### **Matter arising**

Minute 5 (Code of Conduct Update) – resolution number 3:

“The Committee Requests that a copy of the report be forwarded to the local Parish Councils for their information”

The Director of Law and Governance agreed to check that this had been undertaken.

### **10.     Ending Abuse in Public Life - Council's Self-Assessment and Toolkit**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance which provided an overview of the ‘Ending Abuse in Public Life’ Council Self-Assessment Toolkit.

As part of the 'Debate Not Hate' campaign the Local Government Association (LGA) had created a toolkit as a resource designed to aid local Councils in tackling and mitigating the impact and risks of abuse and intimidation that Councillors may encounter as part of their role, supporting them to be safe.

The first stage proposed by the toolkit was for an evidence-gathering exercise to be undertaken that would inform the preparation of a summary and forward plan including the use of best practise examples provided within the toolkit.

The toolkit was structured around five principles and offered practical approaches to implementing those principles which were set out in the report under the headings:

1. Creating supportive and informed spaces
2. Creating a risk-led approach
3. Creating an infrastructure
4. Creating connections
5. Creating a culture of safety and respect

The Committee considered and discussed the report and asked questions including how the process would be undertaken and how the Council would collaborate with the police as a partner in protecting Councillors.

**RESOLVED that the Committee endorse the use of the toolkit by Coventry City Council and requested that an evidence gathering exercise be undertaken (as recommended by the toolkit) to inform a summary and forward plan for the Committee's consideration.**

#### 11. **Six Monthly Review of Members' 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 for the period 1 January to 30 June 2024.

During consideration of the report, discussion turned to the declaration form itself and a suggestion in relation to hospitality declarations that the form be amended to provide an opportunity for Members to demonstrate how receipt of hospitality would benefit the city. It was subsequently suggested and agreed by Members that an additional section be added to the form accordingly.

**RESOLVED that the Committee notes the Gifts and Hospitality Register entries from 1 January to 30 June 2024 and requests that Officers amend the declaration form to include a section on the benefit to the City of the declared hospitality.**

12. **Six Monthly Review of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance which provided a six-month review of Officers Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality Register for the period 1 January to 30 June 2024.

**RESOLVED that the Committee notes the entries of gifts and hospitality received by Officers from 1 January to 30 June 2024.**

13. **Code of Conduct Update**

The Ethics Committee received a report of the Director of Law and Governance which provided an update on national issues in relation to the ethical behaviour of Elected Members and the local position in Coventry regarding Code of Conduct issues.

The Committee also noted the position in relation to the local Parish Councils and their Codes of Conduct.

**RESOLVED that the Ethics Committee:**

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

14. **Ethics Committee Work Programme 2024-25**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance, appended to which was the Committee's Work Programme for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

**RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2024/25 be received and noted with minor amendments to the 20 March 2025 meeting to include 'Six Monthly Review of Members Gifts and Hospitality' and to change the date of the work programme to '2025/26'.**

15. **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 other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.30 am)