



**People, Performance and Development Committee
12 May 2015**

Officer Code of Conduct amendment

Purpose of the report:

Following an Internal Audit Report on “Organisational Ethics”, the officer code of conduct has been reviewed and an addition is recommended.

This report is being brought to People, Performance and Development Committee to report the changes made as a result of the audit.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the People Performance and Development Committee endorse the proposed amendment to the Officer Code of Conduct policy to the Council.

Introduction:

1. Working in the service of the public requires a high standard of ethics and values from officers of the council. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to set out what those standards are and to help employees support the County Council’s aim to provide high quality services fairly and efficiently in line with its values of listening, responsibility, trust and respect.
2. The Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the County Council, agency workers, contractors and their staff whilst working for, or on behalf of, the Authority.
3. Following an internal audit report on “organisational ethics” it has been requested that we make an amendment to the policy to ensure that officers are aware of the recognised ethics of public service.

Seven standards of public service

4. It is recommended that the following addition is made to the Officer code of conduct:

“The Council needs to ensure its decisions and operations are open, accountable and in line with recognised ethical standards. Officers of the Council are therefore required to be aware of and act in accordance with The Seven Standards of Public Life, which are:

Selflessness - Officers and members should act solely in terms of the public interest;

Integrity - Officers and members should avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work;

Objectivity - Actions and decisions should be taken impartially, fairly and on merit using the best evidence and without discrimination;

Accountability - Officers and members are accountable to the public and submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this;

Openness - Actions and decisions should be taken in an open and transparent manner and information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing;

Honesty - Officers and members should be truthful; and

Leadership - Officers and members should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.”

Conclusions:

5. The 7 standards of Public service to be added to the code of conduct – see appendix 1 section 2

Financial and value for money implications

6. There is no cost to the proposals.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

7. The Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the County Council, agency workers, contractors and their staff whilst working for, or on behalf of, the Authority.

Risk Management Implications

8. N/A

Next steps:

- A report recommending an amendment to the Officer Code of Conduct will be considered at Council on 19 May 2015.
 - Code of conduct to be updated
 - Snet to be updated
 - Code of conduct to be publicised.
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Sources/background papers:

Internal audit “organisational ethics”

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