

County Council Meeting – 9 February 2021

REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Mr David Harmer (Chairman)
Mr Keith Witham (Vice Chairman)
Dr Peter Szanto
Mrs Victoria Young
Mr Stephen Cooksey
Mr Stephen Spence

1. At its meeting on 22 May 2020, the Audit and Governance Committee considered the Ethical Standards Annual Report and established a working group to review possible changes to the Member Code of Conduct and the Arrangements for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches of the Member Code of Conduct.
2. The working group submitted its first report to the Audit and Governance Committee on 27 November 2020, which related to the appointment of two Independent Persons and revised Arrangements for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches of the Member Code of Conduct. The working group also advised that it would consider the final LGA Councillor Code of Conduct after it had been published.

The Audit and Governance Committee submitted the recommendations in the report to Full Council on 8 December 2020, which were approved.

3. The LGA published a final model Councillor Code of Conduct on 3 December 2020, and minor amendments were made to make it bespoke for Surrey County Council.

A new Councillor Code of Conduct and minor consequential amendments to the Arrangements for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches of the Councillor Code of Conduct were considered by the working group at its meeting on 8 January 2021 and a second report was submitted to the Audit and Governance Committee on 29 January 2021.

The working group also recommended that the new Councillor Code of Conduct comes into operation at the first Council Annual General Meeting after the next election.

4. **Recommendations**

That Full Council **approves**:

- (1) The revised Councillor Code of Conduct. (Appendix A)

(2) The amendments to the Arrangements for Dealing with Allegations of Breaches of the Councillor Code of Conduct. (Appendix B)

(3) In addition to compliance with the Councillor Code of Conduct, Members are expected to comply with the following codes: (a) Member/Officer Protocol (b) Planning Code of Best Practice.

It is **further recommended** that the revised Councillor Code of Conduct comes into force at the next Council AGM following a Council election.

David Harmer
Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee
29 January 2021