



People, Performance and Development Committee  
9 April 2024

**Surrey County Council Officers Code of Conduct**

**Purpose of the report:**

To update the Committee and seek the approval of the updated Officers Code of Conduct, which forms part of the Constitution of the Council.

This report is being brought to People, Performance and Development Committee under its delegated powers in accordance with Section 2, para 6.13 (a) of the Constitution:

“determine policy on pay and contractual terms and conditions of employment of all staff”.

**Recommendations:**

1. It is recommended that the Committee agree the amendments of the Officers' Code of Conduct and recommend approval by Full Council at the Annual General Meeting on 21 May 2024.

**BACKGROUND:**

1. The Code of Conduct is published on the Intranet and also available on the Surrey County Council website as part of the constitution of the Council. The current published Code of Conduct is dated November 2022.
2. The Code is part of the constitution of the council. The code forms part of the Statement of Particulars (Part 2) and includes links to the following related information:
  - Equalities information

- Drug & Alcohol policy
  - Smokefree policy
  - Conflict of interest guidance
  - Gifts and hospitality policy and guidance
  - Information governance including Data Protection
  - Health & Safety
  - Information Technology & Digital policies
  - Whistleblowing
  - Financial governance
  - Procurement guidelines
  - Disciplinary Policy
  - Personal use of social media guidelines
3. The custodian of the policy is the Director of People and Change. All policies and inter-relationships are centrally reviewed by the HR Policy and Reward Board and Surrey County Council Trades Unions, whose role it is to act as one body and represent the interests of its constituent bodies and their members in response to Surrey County Council proposals.
  4. Following the update to the Code of Conduct in winter 2022, it was agreed that the Officer Code of Conduct would be reviewed annually with a view to align with other policy amendments and reflect current working practices.
  5. The Code of Conduct has been amended in consultation with Internal Audit and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team. A full update including Health & Safety and Information Technology and Digital (IT&D) colleagues was conducted in Winter 2022.

<b>DOCUMENT AMENDMENTS:</b>
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1. To approve the Code of Conduct, the amendments are detailed below:

1. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

The Council is committed to creating a workplace that is inclusive and compassionate, where we value diversity and create a collaborative and trusting environment for people to carry out their roles and responsibilities to ensure that no one is left behind.

The Council sets out our commitment to the principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and all staff are expected to demonstrate commitment to these principles in carrying out their work.

## **2. Ending Bullying and Harassment Policy**

This was approved by the People, Performance and Development Committee in March 2023, has been referenced in section 7.2 of the Code of Conduct, entitled 'Working with Colleagues', in order to layout the Council's approach to colleagues who demonstrate poor or threatening behaviour to colleagues.

### **Next Steps**

The Code of Conduct will be communicated to the organisation through an internal communications campaign, which will highlight the areas of change and will ask current employees to revisit and read the new code.

In addition, a new course is being created on our Learning Management System, which will be mandatory for all employees to complete, in order to ensure existing employees revisit the Code of Conduct annually.

The Code of Conduct will also be included as part of new recruits' onboarding process. All new employees will be asked to read the policy prior to commencing employment with Surrey County Council and sign a declaration to say they have read and understood the code.

## **3. Glossary of policies**

A hyperlinked list of the relevant policies has been detailed for the reader in Section 13 of the document.

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**Sources/background papers:**

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