



People, Performance and Development Committee
7 April 2025

Surrey County Council Officer Code of Conduct

Purpose of the report:

To seek the Committee's endorsement for the updated Officer Code of Conduct, which forms part of the Constitution of the Council, before it is presented to Council for approval in May 2025.

This report is being brought to People, Performance and Development Committee (PPDC) 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 People, Performance and Development Committee endorses the updated Officer Code of Conduct and recommends its approval to the Council.

BACKGROUND:

1. The Officer Code of Conduct is published on the Council's intranet and is also available on the Surrey County Council website as it forms part of the Constitution of the Council. The current published Officer Code of Conduct is dated February 2024.
2. All employees are subject to the Officer Code of Conduct and this is confirmed in every employees' Statement of Particulars of Employment. It also applies to agency workers and contractors and their staff whilst working for or on behalf of Surrey County Council. The Officer Code of Conduct includes links to the following related information:

- Equalities information
 - Drug and Alcohol in the Workplace policy
 - Ending Bullying and Harassment policy
 - Smokefree Workplace policy
 - Conflict of interest guidance
 - Gifts and Hospitality policy and guidance
 - Information Governance including Data Protection
 - Health and Safety
 - Information and Technology management
 - Whistleblowing policy and guidance
 - Financial governance
 - Procurement and Contractor guidelines
 - Disciplinary policy
 - Personal use of social media guidelines
3. The custodian of the Code of Conduct is the Director of People and Change. All policies and related documents 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. The Officer Code of Conduct is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with other policy amendments and reflect current working practices.
5. The Officer Code of Conduct has been amended in consultation with Internal Audit, Health and Safety, IT and Digital colleagues, Staff Networks and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team.

DOCUMENT AMENDMENTS:

6. The amendments to the Officer Code of Conduct are detailed below:
- i) The language has been updated to make it more readable and understandable for all new starters and existing colleagues, whilst retaining the formal nature of the Code.
 - ii) Reference to the Ending Bullying and Harassment policy, which was approved by the People, Performance and Development Committee in 2024, has been included for the first time, including a sexual harassment at work-related events policy in clause 9.3.

- iii) A Duty of Candour section has been included for relevant Health Care workers, in line with Regulation 20 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.
- iv) A hyperlinked glossary of policies has been included in Section 19.

IMPLICATIONS:

7. Legal

There are no legal implications raised in this report.

8. Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

9. Equalities

There are no direct equalities implications of this report.

10. Risk management

The Officer Code of Conduct provides the framework for officers of the Council to operate under, with distinct policies and guidance covering the Nolan Principles and organisational-centric behaviours and governance requirements. It provides a transparent way in which to work and supports the Council's commitment to managing risk appropriately.

CONCLUSIONS:

11. The Officer Code of Conduct has undergone scrutiny from the relevant services including Internal Audit, Health and Safety, Legal and People and Change.

12. The People, Performance and Development Committee is asked to endorse the updated Code of Conduct and recommend its approval to Council.

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