

Meeting:	Standards Committee
Meeting Date:	21 November 2024
Publication:	Open
Council Priority:	
Wards:	All
Report of:	Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Subject: Amending the Code of Conduct for Members

1. Recommendations

The Committee are asked to:

1.1. Approve the proposed amendment to the Code of Conduct for Members at paragraph 2.1 as marked in **Appendix 1**.

2. Report summary

2.1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the amendment to the Code of Conduct for Members as marked in **Appendix 1**.

3. Details

3.1. The Standards Committee is responsible for:

3.1.1. Advising the council on the adoption or revision of the Code;

3.1.2. Considering whether complaints of breach of the Code should be investigated and hearing complaints which have been investigated.

3.1.3. Agreeing procedures for investigation of complaints of breach of the Code.

3.2. The system of regulation of standards of councillor conduct in England is governed by the Localism Act 2011. Local authorities are under a duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by their elected members and co-opted members. Every local authority must have a code of conduct for its members,

which must be consistent with the “Seven Principles of Public Life”: selflessness, honesty, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness and leadership. The code of conduct must also make provision for the registration and disclosure of pecuniary and other interests.

3.3. The council has adopted a Code of Conduct for its members which is in Part 6 of the Constitution and is on the council’s website.

3.4. Paragraph 2.1 of the Code states as follows:

“You must not, at any time, even when not conducting or giving the impression you are conducting the business of Islington Council, conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or the Council into disrepute”

3.5. On review of the Code of Conduct, it was noted that paragraph 2.1 is a slight departure from the suggested wording in the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct. Officers have therefore deleted the above paragraph and replaced it with wording that accords with the LGA Model Code.

4. Other options considered and the reasons for recommending this proposal

Not applicable.

5. Key impacts and risks of the proposal

Not applicable.

6. Contribution to the Islington Together 2030 Plan

Not applicable

7. Consultation and community engagement

Not applicable.

8. Implications

8.1. Financial Implications

No financial implications.

8.2. Legal Implications

Section 28 Localism Act 2011 states as follows:

“(6) A relevant authority other than a parish council must have in place –

(a) Arrangements under which allegations can be investigated and

(b) Arrangements under which decisions on allegations can be made.

(7) Arrangements put in place under subsection (6)(b) by a relevant authority must include provision for the appointment by the authority of at least one independent person –

(a) whose views are to be sought, and taken into account, by the authority before it makes its decision on an allegation that it has decided to investigate, and

(b) whose views may be sought –

(i) by the authority in relation to an allegation in circumstances not within paragraph (a),

(ii) by a member, or co-opted member, of the authority if that person’s behaviour is the subject of an allegation, and

(iii) by a member, or co-opted member, of a parish council if that person’s behaviour is the subject of an allegation and the authority is the parish council’s principal authority...”

8.3. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

8.3.1. Not applicable

8.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

9. The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

Timetable for implementation

Not applicable

Appendices: Appendix 1 – amended Code of Conduct for Members

Relevant decisions / reports:

- None

Background papers: None

Report approval:

Authorised by:

Alison Stuart, Director of Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer

Date: 13 November 2024

Responsible Officer: Farida Hussain, Deputy Director of Law

Email: farida.hussain@islington.gov.uk

Legal Implications Author: Sonal Mistry, Senior Lawyer (Governance)

Email: sonal.mistry@islington.gov.uk