

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**7 FEBRUARY 2022**

### **PRESENT**

Councillors D. Acton (in the Chair), J.M. Axford, D. Butt, G. Carter, L. Dagnall, J.D. Newgrosh, K. Procter, R. Thompson and B.G. Winstanley.

#### In attendance

Dominique Sykes	Head of Governance
Alexander Murray	Governance Officer

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. Chilton, M. Mirza and D. Western

### **33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

### **34. COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Chair informed the Committee that Scrutiny were required to approve the Code of Conduct before it could be considered by Council for adoption as part of the Council's Constitution. The Code of Conduct had been reviewed by the Standards Committee, the Cross-party Constitution Working Group, and following agreement by the Committee it would be submitted to the Executive before going to full Council for final approval.

Councillor Carter had expected the code would state that all Councillors would have been listed as be honest and truthful at all times. The Chair responded that honesty was covered within the general principles of the code. Councillor Carter did recognise honesty was in the appendices but felt it should be in the main body of the Document.

Councillor Axford asked where the amendments within the code had come from. The Head of Governance responded that the amendment had come from the Standards Committee, who had discussed the code at length.

Councillor Butt asked about the Committee's ability to recommend changes to the code. The Head of Governance responded that changes could be made and if they were the code would then be resubmitted to the Standards Committee for approval.

Councillor Carter asked if someone made untruthful claims to win an election would that be considered a breach of the Code. The Head of Governance responded that in addition to the code there was a guiding document which

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provided a wider range of examples to further elucidate how the code was to be understood.

Councillor Butt asked questions relating to the role of the Monitoring Officer and when they would intervene during meetings to prevent violations. The Head of Governance responded that intervention by the Monitoring Officer would infringe on the role of the Chair. The Head of Governance informed the Committee that there were no powers regarding sanctions for the monitoring officer to use if there is a breach of the Code, although there had been a general call nationally for the situation to be addressed.

Councillor Proctor welcomed the Code of Conduct and spoke of the consultation that was undertaken with Councillors and the Standards Committee.

Following the discussion, the Committee approved the Code of Conduct for submission to the Executive and Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the Committee approve the Code of Conduct for Submission to the Executive and Council

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and finished at 6.25 pm