

Annual Report of the Monitoring Officer to the Standards and Conduct Committee

Date: 14th March 2022

Report of: City Solicitor

Report to: Standards and Conduct Committee

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

This annual report to the Standards and Conduct Committee summarises the work carried out by the Monitoring Officer and her staff to support the Committee throughout the year.

Recommendations

- a) Members are asked to consider the matters set out in this report.

Why is the report being put forward?

- 1 The report from the Monitoring Officer is attached at Appendix 1 and provides assurances in respect of work undertaken to;
 - Ensure registers of interests and dispensations were correctly administered.
 - Deal with any sensitive interests.
 - Assess and respond to complaints.
 - Support Parish and Town Councils.

What impact will this report have?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 2 The Council's ethical framework for elected members is a key component of the Council's Values of being open, honest and trusted and treating people fairly.
- 3 Principle 3 of the Code of Corporate Governance states that the Council will put in place a Code of Conduct and keep it under review.
- 4 The work undertaken by the Monitoring Officer and her staff, and by this committee, ensures that these arrangements remain up to date and fit for purpose and that the risk of breaching the statutory requirements is minimised.

- 5 In relation to complaints against councillors, the Monitoring Officer has considered the information above and does not consider that there are any adverse trends in the types of complaints received, and as no potential breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct have been revealed, there are no issues to address through training.
- 6 In managing risks to Members' personal safety, the Monitoring Officer has, on application from Members, granted permissions on requests for Members' Personal addresses to be withheld from the Public Register of Interests.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 7 In relation to complaints against Councillors, in all cases referred to in the Monitoring Officer's report: -
 - a) The subject member was informed of the complaint and invited to provide information to assist in the assessment of it.
 - b) The Independent Person is consulted and invited to comment in advance of all Assessments being completed.
 - c) the Complainant is contacted, and an explanation provided as to the outcome of their complaint.

What are the resource implications?

- 8 There are no resource implications arising from this report the Monitoring Officer advises that she is satisfied with both the capacity and resilience of resources available.

What are the legal implications?

- 9 The Localism Act 2011 places a duty on the Council to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst Members and co-opted Members of the authority.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 10 The arrangements described within this report provide assurance that the authority, parish and town councils, individual councillors and the Monitoring Officer are complying with the requirements set out in the Localism Act 2011.

Does this report support the council's three Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

- 11 Having a well-functioning ethical framework helps maintain confidence in the governance arrangements of the authority and thereby of the Council's objectives.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 12 This a factual report detailing the operation of the ethical framework in place at Leeds City Council.

How will success be measured?

- 13 The Monitoring Officer has ensured that arrangements are in place for the registration and declaration of Interests and gifts and hospitality. The Monitoring Officer as also supported the Council in its duty to adopt and keep under review a Code of Conduct.
- 14 All elected Members have complied with the statutory requirements relating to the registration and declaration of interests, use of dispensations and there have been no identified failures under the Council's procedures in respect of adherence to the Councillor Code of Conduct.

What is the timetable for implementation?

- 15 Other than statutory requirements on relating to the registration of interests there are no required timescales for implementation.

Appendices

- 16 Appendix 1 Annual Report of the Monitoring Officer

Background papers

- 17 None.