

FULL COUNCIL COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 12 April 2021

Title: Members Code of Conduct

Contact Officer: Town Clerk - Sharon Groth

Background

The External Audit report for 2019/20 identified that that the Council has not reviewed the Code of Conduct for several years – and suggested that an authority of this size should be doing this on an annual basis.

Current Situation

All parish and town Council's in Oxfordshire have adopted the same Code of Conduct – and this is in order that the Monitoring Officers at the District Council's operate off the same codes for simplicity. Therefore locally there have been no amendments to the code and for that reason the Town Clerk has not felt it necessary to 'rubber stamp' the code each year.

Members will be aware that there have been several consultations on the Code of Conduct and in fact a national code has been drafted for adoption. However, at this stage the Monitoring Officers of the Oxfordshire Districts are waiting on clarification and therefore will not be in a position to adopt the new code until 2022.

In order to comply with the recommendations of the External Auditor the purpose of this report is for the Town Clerk to present to Council the current Oxfordshire Code of Conduct which you all signed up to on election in May 2019 and the by-election in August 2019, for reaffirmation of acceptance and adoption.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability. Failure to adopt the Oxfordshire Code of Conduct could result in the Council receiving a qualified audit for the year 2020/21.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and reaffirm the adoption of the Code of Conduct – being the Oxfordshire Code adopted in May 2019.