

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE AUDIT, STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 12TH APRIL 2022, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), P. J. Whittaker (Vice-Chairman), A. J. B. Beaumont, M. Glass (substituting for Councillor C. Spencer), J. E. King, A. D. Kriss, M. Middleton, K. J. Van Der Plank and Mr B. McEldowney

In attendance: Mr. N. Preece – Grant Thornton, Mr. J Murray – Grant Thornton (on Microsoft Teams)

Officers: Mr J. Howse, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. A. Bromage (on Microsoft Teams), Mr P. Carpenter (on Microsoft Teams), Mrs J. Willis (on Microsoft Teams) and Mrs. J. Gresham

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NEW MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

The Monitoring Officer presented an update in respect of the New Model Code of Conduct. During consideration of the report, it was noted that the information provided to the Committee was as a result of work that had been undertaken since the publication of the new Local Government Association (LGA) model Code of Conduct in December 2020.

The new LGA model Code of Conduct had been used as a starting point for the pan-Worcestershire Code of Conduct presented for Members' attention. It was reported that Monitoring Officers across Worcestershire had been involved in making the changes and had agreed the final version for Members of the Committee to approve.

Members were pleased with the new document; however, they were particularly interested in how robustly the new Code would be implemented and enforced amongst Members. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that Members had to take responsibility for their own actions and that it was important that all Group Leaders worked closely with Members to ensure that this was cascaded appropriately.

There was a brief discussion in respect of the cost of items purchased by the Council and whether best value for money was always available. Officers explained that there was a robust procurement process in place

when purchasing items for the Council that provided best value in this area; and that to buy items individually could result in the outcome of costs being disproportionately high.

It was confirmed to the Committee that the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) definition of bullying had been used as part of the new Model Code of Conduct, however individual cases would be considered on a case by case basis.

RECOMMENDED the Worcestershire-wide draft Code of Conduct be adopted by the Council.

The meeting closed at 7.15 p.m.

Chairman