

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Standards Committee

14 March 2025

TITLE:	Review of Local Ethical Framework
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Mike Gledhill - Leader
CONTACT OFFICER:	Linden Vernon – Head of Democratic Services
WARDS INVOLVED:	Non-Specific

Appendix Attached:
Appendix A – Proposed Revised Local Ethical Framework
Appendix B – Code of Practice For Members - Gifts and Hospitality

1. Reason for the Report

1.1 To review to the Local Ethical Framework which draws together various Council policies to ensure high standards of ethical behaviour and good governance throughout the Authority.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Committee endorses the revised Local Ethical Framework.

3. Executive Summary

3.1 To ensure high standards of ethical behaviour and good governance throughout the Authority the Council has adopted a range of policies and procedures. These have been brought together into an established Ethical Framework.

3.2 The Framework includes a commitment to review the document to ensure that it is entirely “fit for purpose” and reflects all relevant best practice guidance. A revised Framework is therefore proposed in **Appendix A** to this report for the consideration of the Committee. The Framework includes the “Code of Practice For Members - Gifts and Hospitality” (**Appendix B**).

3.3 Following endorsement of the revised Framework group leaders will be asked to support the document.

4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 High standards of ethical behaviour and good governance are fundamental to the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities.

5. **Options and Analysis**

5.1 The Committee may wish to suggest alternative amendments to the revised Local Ethical Framework.

Mark Trillo
Executive Director (Governance and Regulatory Services)
and Monitoring Officer

Web Links and Background Papers

Various policies of the Council

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6. **Background and Detail**

6.1 Section 27 (1) of The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to promote and maintain high standards of conduct for its elected and co-opted members. To ensure high standards of ethical behaviour and good governance throughout the Authority the Council has adopted a number of policies in addition to the Members' Code of Conduct itself.

6.2 The various policies are drawn together within one document to clarify their place and role within the overall Ethical Framework. This is published on the Council's website with its Constitution, to provide a route map for all Members, Officers and the public to identify and consider the policies and procedures which the Council has in place under its Ethical Framework.

6.3 The Framework includes a commitment to review the document to ensure that it is entirely "fit for purpose" and reflects all relevant best practice guidance. A proposed revised Local Ethical Framework is therefore provided in **Appendix A** to this report for the consideration of the Committee. This takes into account consequential amendments including revised principles for good governance with regards to the Council's Code of Corporate Governance. The Framework also includes the "Code of Practice For Members - Gifts and Hospitality" in **Appendix B**.

6.4 The Ethical Framework was endorsed by all political groups within the Council upon adoption. This included a statement to confirm the commitment of each group leader to uphold both the letter and spirit of the documents forming part of the Ethical Framework and to seek to ensure compliance with those requirements by all Members within those political groups. It is proposed that group leaders be asked to consider the re-endorsement of the revised Framework following its approval.