

Rother District Council

Report to	-	Council
Date	-	24 May 2023
Report of the	-	Audit and Standards Committee
Subject	-	Reference from the Audit and Standards Committee

The Council is asked to consider the recommendations arising from the Audit and Standards Committee meeting held on 20 March 2023 as set out below.

AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 20 MARCH 2023

AS22/51. PROPOSED CODE OF CONDUCT

At the last meeting, the Audit and Standards Committee (A&SC) agreed to convene a small informal working group to consider and review the Local Government Association's (LGA) model Code of Conduct (CoC) with the view to recommending formal adoption from the new civic year. A copy of the proposed CoC was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Working Group met on Friday 17 March 2023 and consisted of Councillors Mrs Barnes, Courtel and Thomas. As well as consideration of the LGA's model CoC, the Group also considered the alignment of codes with the parish and town councils, the inclusion and undertaking of relevant CoC training and the Council's main comments submitted to the LGA's consultation in July 2020. The monetary limit of gifts was also considered with a potential increase from £25 (current level) to £50 (as model LGA CoC).

Overall, the Working Group was supportive of the LGA's simplified CoC and recommended that the monetary limit of gifts remained at £25 (this would mean an amendment to the LGA's model CoC). Members requested that the explanatory flow-charts and diagrams were also included in the CoC and consideration was given to revising the Social Media Policy as part of a wider review of the communications strategy in due course.

Following discussion, the A&SC recommended the adoption of the draft CoC at Appendix 1 to the report, with the level for the registration of any gift or hospitality to be retained at the Council's current level of £25 at paragraph 10.2 of the model CoC.

RECOMMENDED: That the proposed draft Code of Conduct at Appendix 1 be approved and adopted, as amended at paragraph 10.2 as set out above.

(Audit and Standards Agenda Item 5)

AS22/52. **AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - DELEGATIONS TO OFFICERS**

Members received the report of the Chief Executive which presented an amendment to the Constitution for approval and adoption. The approval process for delegations to officers must be approved and adopted by full Council. To regularise and improve clarity it was recommended that Article 15.3, Changes to the Constitution be reworded as follows:

- (a) **Approval:** All Changes to the Constitution including delegations to officers, will be approved by the Council after consideration of the proposal by the Audit and Standards Committee.

Members were supportive of the amendment.

RECOMMENDED: That Article 15.3 of the Constitution be amended as follows:

- (a) **Approval:** All Changes to the Constitution including delegations to officers, will be approved by the Council after consideration of the proposal by the Audit and Standards Committee.

(Audit and Standards Agenda Item 9)

Chair
Audit and Standards Committee