

This Report will be made public on 24 February 2021



Report Number **AUG/20/13**

**To:** Audit and Governance  
**Date:** 4 March 2021  
**Status:** Key Decision  
**Responsible Officer:** Amandeep Khroud, Assistant Director, Governance and Law

**SUBJECT:** ANNUAL REPORT - MAINTAINING ETHICAL STANDARDS

**SUMMARY:** This annual report to the Audit and Performance Committee is submitted in accordance with the Committee's term of reference as follows:

*"To receive an annual report on the District Council's ethical governance arrangements".*

One of the roles of the council's Monitoring Officer is to advance good governance and ensure the highest standards of ethical behaviour are maintained through the effective discharge of their statutory duties.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. To receive and note report AUG/20/13.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

**1.1** The introduction of the Local Government Act 2000 brought about an increased focus by the Government and local authorities on the issue of ethics and Ethical Governance. The Codes have been put into place in order to enhance the Council's ethical standards and governance framework. They set out the standards of behaviour that the Council expects of its Councillors and staff and how they relate to one another.

**1.2** Ethical governance' lies at the very heart of the way in which an organisation is run, how its business is transacted and how its decisions are taken.

### **1.3 The key issues identified in the report are:**

- No dispensations were granted by the Audit and Governance Committee to District Councillors during 2020/21.
- Training on the Code of Conduct was included in the District Councillor's Member Induction Programme post the May 2019 elections.
- All elected Members of the Council and all Town and Parish Councils have completed and submitted their Register of Interest forms.
- During the financial year 20/21, 17 complaints were received relating to district and parish Councillors, compared with 16 in 19/20 and 20 in 18/19.
- Two investigations were concluded in 20/21.
- On 24 November 2020, Andrew Vanburen was appointed as Independent Member of the Audit & Governance. He will fulfil a very useful function as regards the ethical framework.

## **2. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS**

### **2.1 Legal Officer's Comments**

The legal issues are covered in the main body of the report.

### **2.2 Finance Officer's Comments**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **2.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications**

This report does not directly have any diversity and equality implications.

## **3. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officers prior to the meeting:

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