
**A CODE FOR THE FUTURE - A CONSULTATION PAPER ON THE REVIEW OF
THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS**

Responsible Cabinet Member(s) - Councillor John Williams, Leader

Responsible Director(s) - Paul Wildsmith, Director of Corporate Services

Purpose of Report

1. To consider views on a consultation paper on the review of the Code of Conduct for Members issued by the Standards Board for England.

Background

2. A report was presented (**attached as an appendix**) to the Council's Standards Committee meeting held on 11th April 2005 to seek their views on a consultation paper on the review of the Code of Conduct for Members issued by the Standards Board for England. The Standards Board has invited comments on the consultation paper by 17th June, 2005.
3. The Standards Committee endorsed the proposed responses set out in the report on the specific questions posed in the consultation paper and Council is invited to support that decision. The consultation paper itself is also **attached**.
4. The attention of Members is drawn particularly to the questions relating to interests i.e. QS 16-23 where a number of innovations are suggested.

Outcome of Consultation

5. There has been no formal consultation on this matter by the Borough Council. Consultation is, obviously, the exercise being carried out by the Standards Board for England. The papers submitted to the Standards Committee, have, however, been circulated to all Parish Councils in the Borough Council area, in accordance with normal practice.

Legal Implications

6. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

7. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the

Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

8. The issues contained within this report affect all Member are required to be considered by Council.

Conclusion

9. Although there have not been great problems with the operation of the existing Code in Darlington, there are areas of the Code which could benefit from some amendment and improve clarity.

Recommendation

10. Council are requested to endorse the recommendations of the Standards Committee regarding responses to be made to the specific questions posed by the Standards Board for England in its consultation paper on the review of the Code of Conduct for Members.

Reasons

11. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-

The Standards Board for England has invited comments on its consultation paper and the proposed responses identify issue which would benefit from further consideration/revision of the Code of Conduct.

**Paul Wildsmith,
Director of Corporate Services**

Background Papers

Standards Board for England Consultation Paper 'A Code for the Future'.
Minute No. of the Standards Committee, 11th April, 2005.

Peter Kearsley : Extension 2306
sg