
Challenging Communication Issues – Update to the Officers Code of Conduct – Supporting Information

1. Introduction/Background

1.1 A review has been undertaken of the Council's policies to ensure that they remain fit for purpose, having regard to the increasing use of social media.

1.2 It is recommended that the rules governing the use of social media by officers form part of the Officers Code of Conduct.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The use of social media as a form of communication has increased significantly in recent years and the way in which Council employees present and conduct themselves on social media could have an impact on public perception of the Council.

2.2 It is recommended therefore that clear guidelines be issued regarding the use of social media. This will ensure that all employees understand what is considered to be acceptable behaviour when using social media.

2.3 This proposal therefore seeks to incorporate guidance on the use of social media into the Officers Code of Conduct. By incorporating this within the Code of Conduct, this will additionally ensure that the guidelines are reviewed annually as part of the annual rolling review of the Council's Constitution.

3. Options for Consideration

3.1 The options for consideration are as follows:

- i. We continue to operate under the existing policy and guidance;
- ii. We update the Code of Conduct

4. Proposals

4.1 It is proposed that the Officers Code of Conduct be updated in accordance with the draft attached at Appendix C.

4.2 The proposed amendments include an additional section at paragraph 13 regarding the use of social media. The proposed amendments also include an additional paragraph at 10.2 and some additional word for clarification at paragraph 16.3.

5. Conclusion

5.1 It is hoped that the proposed revisions to the Officers Code of Conduct will provide greater clarity about acceptable levels of conduct.

6. Consultation and Engagement

Please set out here those people/key stakeholders/organisations that have been consulted in the preparation of your report.

6.1 Katie Penlington, Martin Dunscombe

6.2 Trade Unions

Background Papers:

*(add text)

Papers containing facts or material you have relied on to prepare your report. The public can access these background papers.

NOTE: The section below does not need to be completed if your report will not progress beyond Corporate or Operations Board.

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☐ No: ☐

If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box by double-clicking on the box and selecting 'Checked':

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Item is Urgent Key Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Report is to note only | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Wards affected:

*(add text)

Please put a cross in the appropriate box(es) by double-clicking on the box and selecting 'Checked':

Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aim(s):

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | BEC – Better educated communities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | SLE – A stronger local economy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | P&S – Protect and support those who need it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | HQL – Maintain a high quality of life within our communities |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | MEC – Become an even more effective Council |

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority(ies):

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | BEC1 – Improve educational attainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | BEC2 – Close the educational attainment gap |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | SLE1 – Enable the completion of more affordable housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | SLE2 – Deliver or enable key infrastructure improvements in relation to roads, rail, flood prevention, regeneration and the digital economy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | P&S1 – Good at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | HQL1 – Support communities to do more to help themselves |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | MEC1 – Become an even more effective Council |

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy

Footer to be completed by Strategic Support

West Berkshire Council

name of decision body

date of meeting

aims and priorities by *(add text)

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Code of Conduct for Staff