

Report for: Staffing & Remuneration Committee

Title: Code of Conduct

Report authorised by : Richard Grice – Director of Customers, Transformation and Resources

Lead Officer: Ian Morgan – Reward Strategy Manager

Ward(s) affected: n/a

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Non Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with recommendations for the review and update of the Council's Code of Conduct.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

Not applicable.

3. Recommendations

To approve the updated and revised Code of Conduct for Haringey Council as set out in Appendix A.

4. Reason for Decision

The Council has a duty to ensure that the policies, practices and guidelines concerning its workforce are relevant and up to date.

The Council is mindful that periodic assessment of its HR policies, to reflect changes in legislation or clarification of the legal position through relevant case law; represents good practice and helps protect the robustness of its processes. To that end it has introduced a rolling review of workforce policies of which this is the latest reiteration.

5. Alternative options considered

The alternative would be to maintain our HR policies indefinitely and run the risk that processes do not reflect recent changes to legislation or the latest interpretation of case law.

6. Background

6.1 Best practice accepts that a well-written code of conduct is an essential tool in communicating the Council's goals, commitments and values, both to the existing workforce and to new and potential recruits. It also provides an external statement setting out our commitment to the integrity of local government services.

6.2 We use the Code of Conduct as the as the primary communication channel for defining our organisational culture. The Code sets out the common behaviours required from staff regardless of any specific standards attached to an individual's

professional body. The Code articulates the kind of values it wishes to foster in leaders and employees and by doing so helps define acceptable behaviours.

- 6.3. The existing Code of Conduct was last reviewed in February 2012. The HR and Communications teams have collaborated to produce a revised and updated version that embodies current thinking around the format and use of codes of conduct and sets the tone regarding how we wish to communicate with staff. Our aim is that it will encourage discussions about principles and compliance and used as a reference and signpost to related documents and policies.
- 6.4 The Code is explicit about the standards expected from staff and sets out the consequences if those are not adhered to. Individuals disregarding the rules regarding behaviour may be subject to disciplinary action. Flagrant disregard may be viewed as gross misconduct and as a result an individual's job may be in jeopardy.
- 6.5 It is important therefore that all employees have read and understood the Code of Conduct, the standards required by the Council and the consequences if those instructions are not adhered to. To that end we will endeavour to communicate changes to all staff, to distribute copies to all new and prospective employees and ensure that advice is available for the HR team regarding the application of the general principles.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

Ensuring that our HR policies are relevant and up to date supports the Council's commitment to fair and transparent workforce practices.

8. Statutory Officers' comments

8.1 Chief Finance Officer

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The revised Code of Conduct and procedures as implemented will be contained and managed within the existing HR resources.

8.2 Assistant Director of Corporate Governance

The Assistant Director of Corporate Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report. Legal services has been involved and has reviewed the proposed Code of Conduct and confirms that it complies with all relevant legislation

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix A –Haringey Council's Code of Conduct; updated and revised.

10. Local government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Not applicable.