

Report to	Standards Committee
Date of meeting	4 th March 2022
Lead Member / Officer	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
Report author	Gary Williams, Monitoring Officer
Title	Ethics and Standards Training

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report is about the arrangements that will be made for the training of new and returning members after the Local Government Elections in May 2022 (the Elections) in respect of the Code of Conduct.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To inform the Committee of the proposals for the provision of training to new and returning members after the Elections in respect of the Code of Conduct.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That the Committee notes and comments upon the proposals for the provision of training as set out in the report.

4. Report details

4.1. One of the roles of the Standards Committee is to advise and arrange training for Councillors and co-opted members on the Code of Conduct. The Elections are to take place on 5th May 2022 and it will be necessary for every person who is elected to sign an undertaking to abide by the terms of the Code of Conduct. This undertaking forms part of the declaration of acceptance of office that each member must sign before they are able to take up the office of Councillor.

- 4.2. It is therefore imperative that members are given the opportunity to be trained on the provisions of the Code of Conduct as soon as possible after their election.
- 4.3. In 2017 the Welsh Local Government Association produced a common set of training materials for use by all councils following the elections in May 2017. A copy of those materials is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.4. It is intended that a similar process will be followed this year and the WLGA is currently preparing, in consultation with Monitoring Officers, a common set of training materials for use following the Elections. Those materials have not yet been finalised for release.
- 4.5. The training will cover the Code of Conduct and ethics, including civility and respect. An e-learning package is also being developed.
- 4.6. It is proposed that a Code of Conduct workshop will be held for County Councillors in the first week after the Elections. A programme of events will be provided for members of City, Town and Community Councils.
- 4.7. The Chief Executive has as part of his vision for the Council established five principles that, together with the Council's values will underpin the type of organisational culture that he wants to develop.
- 4.8. These principles are that the Council will
- Continue to develop our own culture, the Denbighshire Way
 - Be a Council closer to our communities
 - Have clear performance expectations
 - Promote strong Officer/Member relations
 - Support and develop our staff

4.9. Underpinning these principles are the Council's values of:

- Integrity
- Respect
- Unity
- Pride

4.10 The training that is provided to members following the elections will also cover these principles and values and will incorporate reference to the Council's Protocol on Member/Officer Relations.

4.11 In addition to the training on ethics and standards, the WLGA is, with the network of Heads of Democratic Services, developing common training materials on a number of topics. Those which are most relevant to conduct are training materials for Chairs and specific training on Social Media.

4.12. In addition to the formal training opportunities the Monitoring Officer will be able to provide informal assistance to new and returning members on an ongoing basis in respect of conduct matters.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1. The decision has no direct impact on the Corporate Priorities but a strong internal culture which promotes high standards of conduct and ethics and strong relationships between members and officers will provide an environment that will be conducive to good decision making and governance.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1. There no direct costs associated with this report. The training will be provided by staff whose costs are contained within existing budgets

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

7.1. An assessment is not required for this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1. There has been no consultation with Scrutiny.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

9.1. The service have confirmed in Section 6 that the resource implications of this report will be contained within existing budgets.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1. There is a risk that members who are not adequately trained on the provisions of the Code of Conduct may inadvertently breach it.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Section 8.6.5 Council Constitution.