



WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and Date of Committee	<b>AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 19 MARCH 2024</b>
Subject	<b>EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT</b>
Wards Affected	None.
Accountable Member	Councillor Mathew Parkinson – Chair of the Constitution Working Group. Email: <a href="mailto:mathew.parkinson@westoxon.gov.uk">mathew.parkinson@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable Officer	Andrea McCaskie – Director of Governance. Email: <a href="mailto:andrea.mccaskie@westoxon.gov.uk">andrea.mccaskie@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Report Author	Andrea McCaskie – Director of Governance. Email: <a href="mailto:andrea.mccaskie@westoxon.gov.uk">andrea.mccaskie@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Purpose	To present a recommendation of the Constitution Working Group relating to the adoption of the Employee Code of Conduct and the Corporate and Individual Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Process for the West Oxfordshire District Council workforce.
Annexes	Annex A – Employee Code of Conduct Annex B – Individual Corporate and Individual Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Process
Recommendations	That the Committee Resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Approve the adoption of the Employee Code of Conduct (Annex A) as part of the Constitution (Part 6N);</li><li>2. Approve the Corporate and Individual Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Process (Annex B) as part of the Council's Constitution (Part 6O).</li></ol>
Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working Together for West Oxfordshire</li></ul>
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/	WODC Retained Employees – (including Chief Executive, Director of

Consultation	Finance, and Director of Governance).
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## **1. SUMMARY AND MAIN POINTS**

- 1.1** As part of the review of the Council Constitution, it has been identified that there was a requirement to adopt an Employee Code of Conduct which was up to date with current legislation, policy, and guidance.
- 1.2** At its meeting on 9 January 2024, the Constitution Working Group agreed that the Council adopt the Employee Code of Conduct and the Corporate and Individual Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Process as part of the Council's Constitution.
- 1.3** Publica has recently rewritten their Business Code of Conduct which has been consulted on by all relevant officers including Monitoring Officer, Head of Legal, Head of Counter-Fraud, Communications, IT and HR and adopted a Corporate & Individual Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Process.
- 1.4** The Business Code of Conduct has also been approved by all recognised Trade Unions across the partner Councils and Publica.
- 1.5** It was therefore recommended that the Publica Code of Conduct and Corporate and Individual Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Process were used as a basis for the West Oxfordshire District Council Employee Code of Conduct and Corporate and Individual Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Process and the other partner Councils.
- 1.6** Decisions relating to the Officer Employee Code are part of the delegation to the Audit and Governance Committee, so they have responsibility for approval of the Code and Gifts & Hospitality Process.
- 1.7** Attached in Annex A is the Employee Code of Conduct and in Annex B the Corporate and Individual Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Process for the West Oxfordshire District Council workforce. To ensure it covers what is required, other Council Code of Conducts have also been reviewed and all retained staff of the Council have been individually consulted on both documents.

## **2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Council adopts the Employee Code of Conduct and the Corporate and Individual Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship Process.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1** There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations.

## **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1** Adopting up to date policies ensures that they comply with relevant legislation and best practice guidance helping the Council manage employees more effectively in setting out the behaviours expected of employees. In addition, the Employee Code of Conduct supports the maintenance of the public confidence in Local Government demonstrating the highest levels of integrity and professionalism at all times.

## **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

5.1 By not updating and implementing new policies the Council may fail to comply with laws and regulations and leave itself exposed to costly employment law cases.

**6. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

6.1 The policies have been considered to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. The policies apply equally across the West Oxfordshire District Council workforce.

**7. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no climate and ecological impacts.

**8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The West Oxfordshire District Council Constitution can be found [on the Council's website](#).

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