

Breckland District Council

Report of: Phil Adams, Executive Manager People and Public Protection

To: Overview & Scrutiny Commission: 14 September 2017
Full Council: 2 November 2017

Author: Vicki Lowry, HR Manager (Breckland)

Subject: Officer Code of Conduct

Purpose: This report presents the update of the Officer Code of Conduct.

Recommendation

That the Code of Conduct be approved and to be implemented in line with changes highlighted in Section 2.0.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Code of Conduct is a common reference document for all employees that defines the minimum standards of conduct that employees are expected to observe when carrying out their duties. It is produced in the light of challenges employees face in the current, and more commercially orientated, environment.
- 1.2 The changes made to the Code of Conduct, which was last refreshed in 2012, have been shared with the Staff Forum and Unison representatives and both have agreed to provide support in communicating this update.

2.0 AMENDMENTS MADE TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The following table shows the key changes which have been made to each Section.

<u>Section (number and heading)</u>	<u>Key change(s)</u>
Introduction (New)	Added how the values and Code of Conduct support the performance of the Councils
Scope (New)	To say who is and isn't in scope
Roles and Responsibilities (New)	to provide clarity on who and how should it be used
1.0 Employee Standards (Additional information)	How the Code of Conduct relates to people matters e.g. appraisal, development, recruitment, equality and diversity as it should drive our daily practices
2.0 Information disclosure (Additional information)	Removes references to confidentiality, which is now in an additional heading

3.0 Confidentiality (Additional Information)	Confidentiality was previously included within information disclosure.
4.0 Information security (New)	Added to link with ICT security procedures.
6.0 Relationship with Contractors	Declaration of Directorships is now required.
8.0 Outside Commitments (Amended)	For Breckland required Director consent to take up additional employment. Is now Senior Manager approval (or Director if Senior Manager request)
10. Personal interests (Amended)	<p>Reflects the transfer of the register of interests from Democratic Services to HR.</p> <p>Requirement to declare membership of organisations which has secrecy about rules or membership or conduct.</p> <p>Declaration Form for employees to complete and return to HR (new)</p>
13.0 Gifts and hospitality (Amendment & New para's)	<p>Declarations now made to the HR Team, rather than Monitoring Officer, for recording on the Gifts and Hospitality Register. (Amendment)</p> <p>Cash must not be accepted with the exception, for example of refuse collectors receiving Christmas tips – this section has been changed to clarify that (for example for Refuse Collections) maximum of £5 per donation can be accepted and then shared with the rest of the crew</p> <p>Declaration Form for employees to complete and return to HR (New)</p>
14. Use of financial resources (New)	New addition for Breckland.
20. Debts with the authority (New/Amendment)	<p>Removal of the following paragraph:</p> <p>No employee should owe money to the Council i.e. Council tax arrears, and the existence of such a debt may result in disciplinary action being taken. Any such debt should be brought to the attention of the employees Line Manager or HR as soon as the employee is able.</p> <p>Insertion of the paragraph requiring an</p>

	employee to advise their line manager should they have been overpaid in error.
23. Use of Social Media (New)	New which refers to Social Media Guidance

3.0 OPTIONS

3.1 Do Nothing

3.2 Approve the Code of Conduct for Breckland District Council

4.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

4.1 That the amendments to the Code of Conduct be approved in order to ensure employees are clear on the minimum standards of conduct that they are expected to observe when carrying out their duties

5.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

5.1 To mitigate risk in the application of policies.

5.2 To provide transparent, consistent and fair policies across the Council.

5.3 To actively support culture and change in a positive way.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Constitution & Legal

6.2 Amendments to the Code of Conduct or related relevant policies, will be made as and when there are changes to constitutional or legal requirements.

6.3 The Code of Conduct is designed with the intention to reduce the risk of litigation against the Council

7.0 Corporate Priorities

7.1 The proposals made with the intention of supporting the Councils' corporate priority of providing the right services, at the right time, in the right way by ensuring the recruitment of high caliber individuals are in place to help deliver the corporate vision.

8.0 Risk Management

8.1 These proposals are made (in part) with the intention of reducing the risk of litigation against the Council. These proposals are made with the intention of supporting the Councils strategic position by enabling effective policy management appropriately within the bounds of the law.

9 Staffing

9.1 These proposals are made in order to ensure the best possible infrastructure is in place recruit, select, retain and performance manage employees across the Council.

9.2 These proposals are made to ensure both staff and management are clear on relevant legislation, best practice and risk mitigation.

10 Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales

10.1 Consultation has taken place with Unison

11 Transformation Programme

11.1 These proposals are made to support the Councils' Transformation Programme

Background papers:- None

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory Service

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A Code of Conduct

Appendix B Declaration Form -Personal Interest

Appendix C Declaration Form - Gift/Hospitality