

**CHANGES TO NOLAN PRINCIPLES**  
**(Report by the Head of Legal & Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In its 14th Report, published in January 2013 and entitled “Standards Matter- A Review of Best Practice in Promoting Good Behaviour in Public Life”, the Committee on Standards in Public Life has considered the descriptions of the seven principles of public life.
- 1.2 The Committee, chaired by Sir Christopher Kelly considered that the time was right to undertake a review of the key lessons that had been learnt since the Nolan Committee’s report was first published in 1995 on Ethical Standards in Public Life and to reflect on what had been achieved and what still needed to be done.
- 1.3 The Committee concluded that the current need was for existing arrangements to be more consistently and actively implemented so that expected standards were embedded within an organisation and its processes, with everyone taking ownership of high standards alongside regular monitoring of whether they were being met.
- 1.4 With regard to local government, the Committee expressed concern about the impact of the regime introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and considered this area to be a current risk. The Committee considered that “the new slimmed down arrangements had yet to prove themselves sufficient for their purpose” and that “we have considerable doubt that they will succeed in doing so”. A copy of the full report is available to view using the following link – <http://www.public-standards.gov.uk/17-january-2013/>

**2. SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE**

- 2.1 In response to comments received during their review, the Committee has concluded that it would be “both pointless and unnecessary” to change the principles of public life but that it would be prudent to update the words used to describe them. The new descriptions are enclosed in the Appendix.
- 2.2 Whilst the Code of Conduct adopted by the District Council in July 2012 included a paragraph indicating that the Code was based on the seven principles first established by Nolan, it did not describe these in full. Therefore it is not necessary to either vary the current Code nor revise the Constitution as a result of the Committee’s recent recommendations.
- 2.3 However, the Monitoring Officer is minded to undertake a review of the Code of Conduct after the 2014 local elections and at that time, consideration could be given to the potential advantage in including the descriptions, in full, in any revised Code given that there are occasions when it can be helpful to interpret the Council’s Code of Conduct by reference to the principles.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The Committee is requested to note the description of the seven principles of public life and the implications of these for any future review of the Code.

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Standards Matter – A Review of Best Practice in Promoting Good Behaviour in Public Life.

Committee on Standards in Public Life – January 2013.

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