

Report to:	EXECUTIVE
Relevant Officer:	Carmel McKeogh, Deputy Chief Executive
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council
Date of Meeting:	22 June 2015

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To present a Statement of Ethical Principles to Executive for agreement.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To agree in principle the scope of the Ethical Principles Statement and associated guidance for further internal and external consultation and note that a report will be brought back to a future meeting of the Executive.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 This report seeks to reinforce and further embed the Council's Values through an agreed statement of ethical principles.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

- Not to progress work on the ethical principles;
- To consider alternative ethical principles to those suggested.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The ethical principles cut across all Council priorities. They relate directly to the Council values on integrity and compassion.

5.0 Background Information:

5.1 This Statement of Ethical Principles has arisen from considerations of the type of activities the Council should accept, compromise on, or reject as we seek to deliver our priorities. Put simply, where would we "draw a line in the sand"? What is the right thing to do?

5.2 An example might be the potential letting of a Council building to a payday loan company. With Council-led initiatives such as free primary school breakfasts, the £10 credit union

savers account, and action to tackle illegal money lending, it would be contradictory to act as an enabler for an organisation providing high-cost credit. The principles would prompt officers to consider the positive and negative aspects of such a decision.

5.3 The Ethical Principles aim to ensure our policies and day to day decision-making support the Council's vision and priorities, and help us to live out our values.

5.4 The ethical principles are as follows:

- ✓ Where we can we will ensure our actions and behaviours are guided by the Council's vision, values and priorities;
- ✓ We will use our influence to promote social justice, and the reduction of poverty and inequality;
- ✓ Where possible, we will use our influence to uphold the dignity of all people, respecting equality and valuing diversity;
- ✓ Where we can, we will ensure that our actions and activities promote and support health and wellbeing.

5.5 The principles are supported by a guidance document which is aimed at all Service Managers and Heads of Service across the Council. This will be supplemented by training, conversations and workshops as appropriate.

List of Appendices:

5.6 Appendix 6a: Draft Statement of Ethical Principles

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 The principles would be integrated into our Procurement and Commissioning strategy, within the constraints of the law. The training and rollout would need to re-enforce current arrangements for checking the legality of practice and procedure where required.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 No additional staffing requirements are needed to implement the principles. Awareness communication and training will be built into existing officer roles.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 The principles will complement and reinforce aspects of our Equality Duties and policies.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 No additional direct costs are associated with these principles, although taking account of them could result in cost pressures. However, the framework doesn't *require* specific

decisions, it obliges that wider options are considered.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 The main risks come from an adverse impact on the Council's reputation. The adoption of the principles may attract negative media attention from those perceiving it to address issues they consider irrelevant - "political correctness gone mad". Also, the practical operation of the principles could result in decisions which seem to sit outside our adopted approach, or decisions which are in line with it but perceived by the public or press as being excessive.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 It would be disingenuous to adopt an ethical framework which was without real substance, or which the Council isn't serious about embedding into our decision making process.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 Initial discussions were held with services on the content of the principles and their operation prior to this report. Discussions with the Executive are needed before undertaking further internal and external consultation.

13.0 Background papers:

None

14.0 Key decision information:

14.1 Is this a key decision? No

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number:

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days?

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

15.0 Call-in information:

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed: N/A

Date approved: N/A

17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

17.1

18.0 Executive decision:

18.1

18.2 Date of Decision:

19.0 Reason(s) for decision:

19.1 Date Decision published:

20.0 Executive Members in attendance:

20.1

21.0 Call-in:

21.1

22.0 Notes:

22.1