

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
COUNCIL – 17 MARCH 2021

Recommendation from the Standards Committee on 8 February 2021:-

34. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION MODEL CODE OF COUNCILLOR CONDUCT

Members received a report of the Monitoring Officer detailing the Local Government Association's new Model Code of Conduct.

The following key points were noted:

- The Model Code was a voluntary code, with no legal requirement on the council to adopt it
- much of the substance contained in the Model Code is also covered in the council's current Code of Conduct, which was adopted on 6 May 2020
- a main different between the codes is the language used, with the Model Code written in the first person
- a substantive addition is section 8 of the Model Code which provides a requirement for Members to cooperate with investigations carried out under Code. This is not provided for in the current Code.
- given that adoption would require changes to the council's constitution, the Model Code was reviewed by the Constitution Review Group at their meeting on 14 December 2020, who supported its adoption
- The Model Code could be tailored for individual councils, and therefore could include the council's One Team ethos and social media protocol
- feedback from other Hertfordshire councils indicated that at least half were not planning to adopt the new code this year

Members discussed the merit in adopting the Model Code at this time given other competing priorities. However, the addition of a requirement for Members to cooperate with investigations and the strong message to the public that Members were aspiring to best practice were seen as worthwhile benefits.

RESOLVED:

Members unanimously agreed to recommend to the Full Council on 17 March 2021 to adopt the Model Code, adapted to include the One Team ethos and social media protocol.