

Classification	Item No.
Open	

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Standards Committee</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> February 2024
<b>Title of report:</b>	Member Code of Conduct- Task and Finish Group Review
<b>Report by:</b>	Democratic Services
<b>Decision Type:</b>	Non Key
<b>Ward(s) to which report relates</b>	All

## 1. Introduction and Purpose of the Report

- Update Members of the Standards Committee on the results of the working group held on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and recommendations for elements of the revised code, to then be considered by all Members at Council.

## 2. Background

- In early 2023, Standards Committee proposed that a working group was established to review the current code of conduct and consider whether revisions should be made following the LGA's revised code of conduct.
- The membership of the working group was made for up of 3 Members of the Standards Committee (one from each party), one independent person and the Monitoring Officer.

### **3. Current position**

Consideration was given to review the Council's existing Code of Conduct for Members following the publication of the Local Government Ethical Standards report produced by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) and the Local Government Association's (LGA) Model Code of Conduct (LGA's Model Code).

Documents used at the working group included:-

- The existing Bury code of conduct
- Proposals to comply with The Local Government Ethical Standards report Best Practice recommendations

The 15 Best Practice recommendations were circulated prior to the meeting of the working group with an explanation to be completed of how Bury Council already complies or what steps it is taking in order to comply where it was considered appropriate.

The proposals submitted by the working group are included as appendix 1.

For background information, in terms of definitions of bullying and harassment outlined in Best Practice 1. The evidence received by the CSPL suggests that most allegations of code breaches relate to bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment can have a significant impact on the wellbeing of officers and councillors who are subject to it. Individuals who are subject to bullying or harassment may be pressured to make decisions or act in ways which are not in the public interest. As such, it is important that bullying and harassment are dealt with effectively, and that a local authority's code of conduct makes provision to address these matters.

### **4. Recommendations**

The sub-committee resolved to recommend to Standards Committee in the first instance their findings with an amended draft code produced by the Monitoring Officer before going to Full Council for approval of the Model Code.