



To: All City, Town and Parish Councils in Somerset

Date: 8 April 2022

Dear City, Town and Parish Councillors and Clerks

Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct

We are writing to you regarding the Local Government Association (“LGA”) Model Councillor Code of Conduct (“the Code”) which has been produced by the LGA in association with key partners and is being promoted to councils across the country. The Code is available for all councils to adopt with or without amendments.

There are a number of benefits of this new Code including:-

- A commitment by the LGA to undertake an annual review of the Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation.
- A wealth of information to assist in interpreting the Code including:-
 - ✓ Significant detail within the Code itself to better aid interpretation,
 - ✓ Separate detailed guidance on the Code,
 - ✓ Training slides to support Councils in understanding the Code.
- Many councils are adopting this Code across the country.

In February this year, Somerset County Council resolved to adopt the LGA Code with amendments from May 2022 both for the County Council but also the new Somerset Unitary from April 2023.

In addition, the District Councils in Somerset are being recommended, by their Monitoring Officers, to adopt the LGA Code by September this year.

We attach a copy of the LGA Code which has been adapted for City, Town and Parish Councils with some suggested improvements in blue. The Code builds upon your existing Code of Conduct but is brought up-to-date to include such things as social media, harassment and importantly, a recognition that, as councillors, you should be able to undertake your role without being intimidated, abused, bullied, or threatened by anyone, including the general public.

This Code has been designed to protect your democratic role, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public’s trust in local government.

In the circumstances, the Somerset Monitoring Officers and the Somerset Association of Local Councils ("SALC") highly commend the LGA Code to you.

Ultimately the decision as to whether to adopt the new Code rests with your Council. To assist you in reaching this decision, we have included at the bottom of this letter a link to the guidance that is available to you should you choose to adopt the LGA Code. We would encourage you to review this.

Should you decide to adopt the LGA Code, we would encourage you to do so at your annual council meeting in May this year, so that all councillors in Somerset, particularly dual and triple hatted members, can be working to the same Code of Conduct. This will provide clarity and consistency for councillors and the public.

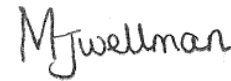
In addition to the wealth of guidance, should you adopt the LGA Code, SALC and the Somerset Monitoring Officers will continue to offer advice and support to you in relation to interpretation of the Code of Conduct should you require it. We would also be happy to facilitate a number of training events for City, Town and Parish Councils on the new Code.

Please do not hesitate to contact Justin Robinson at SALC or your local Monitoring Officer, should you require any further advice or clarification in relation to the content of this letter or the attached LGA Code.

Yours faithfully

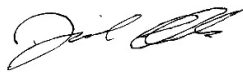


Scott Wooldridge
Monitoring Officer
Somerset County Council



Melanie Wellman
Monitoring Officer
Sedgemoor District Council

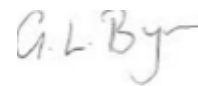
Justin Robinson
Chief Executive Officer
Somerset Association Local Councils



David Clark
Monitoring Officer
Mendip District Council



Amy Tregellas
Monitoring Officer
Somerset West and Taunton Council



Jill Byron
Monitoring Officer
South Somerset Council

Link to LGA Guidance: <https://tinyurl.com/38xe3k4>