

Code of Conduct Adoption – City, Town and Parish Councils

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1. Summary

- 1.1.** In summer 2023, the Committee asked that a short online survey should be sent out to all the city, town and parish councils within Somerset asking them to confirm what code of conduct they were using and requesting that they provide a link to the document.
- 1.2.** A survey was conducted between 9 August 2023 and 22 September 2023 and the results have just been received and a summary report is attached as Appendix 1.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1.**
 1. To note that the online survey has been completed.
 2. To consider what further work by Priority Group 2 and officers could be undertaken.

3. Background

- 3.1.** City, town and parish councils are required to have adopted a Code of Conduct.
- 3.2.** Somerset Council's predecessor authorities, together with the Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC), had promoted to city, town and parish councils a Code of Conduct based upon the Local Government Association's (LGA) Model Code of Conduct the Committee felt that the level of take up should be investigated and the work allocated to Priority Group 2.
- 3.3.** Priority Group 2 gave updates to the Committee on 19 April 2023 and 28 June 2023, at which meeting the Monitoring Officer proposed that the city, town and parish councils within Somerset be sent a short online survey asking each Council to confirm what code of conduct they were using and asking them to provide a link to the document.

3.4. To guide the design of the survey Priority Group 2 wished to know:

1. How many and which cities, towns and parishes had not responded?
2. If there was any useful information in any of the responses on their reasons for not adopting, or adapting the Somerset code before adoption?

4. Options Considered and Consultations undertaken

4.1. All of the city, town and parish councils were invited to complete an online survey between 9 August 2023 and 22 September 2023.

5. Implications

5.1. Whilst all city, town and parish councils are required to have adopted a Code of Conduct there is no legal obligation upon them to adopt the Somerset Council Code of Conduct (based on the LGA Model Code of Conduct).

6. Background papers

6.1. Previous committee debates and the work of Priority 2 working group