

Council

Guidance Note for Membership of Outside Organisations

19 October 2009

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To approve the recommendation from the Standards Committee to adopt the updated Oxfordshire wide guidance note for membership of outside bodies

This report is public

Recommendations

The Standards Committee recommends Council:

- (1) To adopt the advice note for councillors serving on outside bodies as the updated version of the guidance note in place of the existing version in part three of the constitution
- (2) To continue using the annual form to councillors on outside bodies supplemented by additional reports by Councillors in the Member Weekly Bulletin where appropriate.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 All the Monitoring Officers in Oxfordshire originally worked on a common guidance note following the introduction of the ethical framework in the Local Government Act 2000. On standards issues we believe consistency in approach across the county is vital, and the need for this is greater when outside organisations may span a number of districts and have representatives from a number of Oxfordshire authorities on them.
- 1.2 This note has been updated and is being adopted by all the Oxfordshire authorities. Individual variations have been made where this makes it more clearly relevant or helpful, for example, organisations which Cherwell councillors are likely to be involved in are listed in section three.

Proposals

- 1.3 The note has been updated to reflect changes in the law since the original note was agreed
- 1.4 The note is amended in section four to reflect the changes to the Code of Conduct in 2007.

Conclusion

- 1.5 Council is requested to approve the attached note and confirm that it should replace the existing note at part three of the constitution.

Background Information

- 2.1 It is increasingly necessary to work with external organisations and the guidance note is intended to help councillors do this with an understanding of the potential problems that could arise.
- 2.2 There have been three areas of law which have been updated or changed since the original note was produced. These are the laws relating to charities, indemnities for councillors and the new code of conduct in 2007. All these changes are reflected in this updated note.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 It is important that the guidance note reflects current legislation
- 3.2 It is helpful for the note to be consistent across Oxfordshire

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One Retain existing note

Option Two Adopt updated note

Consultations

Oxfordshire authorities The guidance note was worked on in consultation with the other Heads of Legal in Oxfordshire

Implications

Financial:	There are no financial implications Comments checked by [Insert name], [Insert job title] 01295 22[Insert extension number]
Legal:	It is important for councillors to be aware of potential issues that may arise when representing the Council on outside organisations Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal and Democratic Services 01295 221686
Risk Management:	There are risks for councillors in potential conflict of interest situations and it is important that these are minimised Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Assurance Officer 01295 221566

Wards Affected

All

Corporate Plan Themes

Accessible Value for Money Council

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Barry Wood
Portfolio Holder for Policy and Community Planning

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Guidance note for elected members serving on outside organisations
Background Papers	
Members Code of Conduct	
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