

Promoting Compliance With the Code of Conduct

Report by Cllr Matthew Evans MBE

Leader of the Conservative Group 7 Members

I am afraid I will not be able to attend the next Standards Committee meeting, as I will be recovering from an operation. Should you wish my Deputy, Cllr Will Routley to attend in my absence please let the Clerk know.

Since my last appearance all my Group have completed their Code of Conduct training and many have attended other training modules. 5 out the 7 Cllrs have been in their positions for a minimum of 10 years, many a lot longer and would have carried out numerous training courses over the years. Some also do courses like Equalities and Diversity as part of their day jobs, and I do not feel it necessary to duplicate this.

We have Group rules and political ones which we all sign up to, and additional training can be provided by our Conservative Councillors Association as required. This is the relevant section :

11. CONDUCT

- 11.1 Members shall observe the highest standards in their conduct as councillors, Members of the Group and Members of the Party.
- 11.2 In particular, Members shall observe the letter and spirit of the Council's Code of Conduct and the Conservative Party's Code of Conduct.
- 11.3 Members shall ensure that their conduct in their business and private lives does not cause embarrassment to the Group or the Conservative Party.
- 11.4 Members shall ensure that their conduct on social media and other online platforms reflects the requirements in rules 11.1 to 11.3.
- 11.5 Members appointed by the Group or the Council to any non-Council body shall observe equivalent ethical standards in carrying out those duties.

They are well aware of our duties to support high standards of conduct and integrity and there is an internal disciplinary system, should it ever be needed. We also have a Chief Whip.

We operate a buddy scheme for our 2 new Councillors and they know they can come to me or my deputy for advice at any time. From a personal perspective I have been Leader of my Group for over 18 years and do not feel I need any additional training at this time. If there have been any issues which have required local resolution I have attended meetings with the Monitoring Officer and ensured they have been sorted.

I did find the pro forma overly prescriptive and hope this covers all the salient points required.