

Good morning all,

Firstly, season's greetings to you all. I thought that I would drop you a line to introduce myself. I am the Monitoring Officer for both Cotswold District Council and Stroud District Council and work 50:50 between the two councils. I have been in role at Cotswold since the beginning of August, I do apologise that it has taken me some time to make contact which has been due to pressure of work. The Deputy Monitoring Officer at Cotswold District Council is Susan Gargett.

As you will know, my role as Monitoring Office is to provide the district, town and parish councils with advice and assistance in relation to ethical standards. The District Council has responsibility for putting in place arrangements for dealing with complaints under the Code and my role is to carry out an initial assessment of any complaint and decide whether an investigation is necessary.

I am always more than happy to provide advice and assistance to you and my mobile number is 07773302122 if you need to ask me anything.

You may be aware that as a result of a report of the Committee for Standards in Public Life (January 2019 - [link here](#)), the Local Government Association has prepared a Model Code of Conduct which is now available for adoption. I have attached the Model Code to this email.

You will be aware that every council has to adopt a Code of Conduct. There is no set format and the only legal requirement is that it should be underpinned by the Nolan Principles. Having said that, there is distinct advantage to everyone working to the same Code. I will be recommending that Cotswold District Council should adopt the Model Code and I am taking a report to Council in January for this purpose. If it is adopted, I will then write to you all to ask if your council would consider adopting the Model Code.

I will also be reviewing our procedures for the Register of Interests which will necessitate a new form as the current one does not reflect – i.e. in some cases, surpasses - the disclosure requirements in your Codes. More on that in the new year.

I will also be recommending that the Arrangements for investigating complaints under the Code should be amended and I will be taking a report to the Audit Committee, again in January to provide it with a draft to consider. Stroud District Council has recently adopted the procedure I will be recommending to Cotswold and you can find it [here](#) if you would like to have a look at it.

Finally, with elections approaching – as things stand – next May, I thought I might remind you of our obligations relating to the prohibition on political publicity. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986 makes it unlawful to publish or arrange for the publication of any material which appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party.

In this sense, local authority includes a parish council and publish and publication refer to “any communication, in whatever form, addressed to the public at large or to a

section of the public". Aside from direct publicity by the council, this would also include passing on or publishing any political leaflets through the council channels.

The Act also provides for a Code to be issued by the Secretary of State which the local authority must have regard to in coming to any decision on publicity. The Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity can be accessed [here](#)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me

I hope that you will have an enjoyable Christmas despite the tough circumstances we all find ourselves in.



Patrick Arran
Monitoring Officer