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## **AUDIT REPORT: MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT, DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS & STANDARDS ARRANGEMENTS**

To: **Standards Committee – 4 September 2013**

By: **Harvey Patterson, Corporate Services & Regulatory Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

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**Summary: To receive the East Kent Audit Partnership's Audit Report: Members' Code Of Conduct, Disclosure of Interests & Standards Arrangements**

### **For Information**

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#### **1.0 Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 There was provision within the 2013-14 internal audit plan for the East Kent Audit Partnership to review the Council's arrangements surrounding the Members' Code of Conduct, Gifts and Hospitality, Registers of Interest, and Standards Arrangements.
- 1.2 A previous audit had taken place in 2011 while the 2007 Code of Conduct was in operation and received a Reasonable Assurance.

#### **2.0 Audit Report Conclusion**

- 2.1 The Audit found that there is good practice in place through the Member Code of Conduct; training and administrative support to ensure that probity is maintained. The Standards Committee arrangements and the complaint handling processes were generally working well. Most of the expected controls are effective.

#### **3.0 Audit Report: Management Action Plan**

- 3.1 The Monitoring Officer is committed to carrying out the Actions outlined in Management Action Plan.
- 3.2 **Audit Recommendation 2:** *To update the Constitution with a view to removing to the Standards Board for England is included on the Standards Committee at Agenda No:15 in response to Audit Recommendation 2 of the management action plan.*
- 3.3 **Audit Recommendation 4:** *To consider introducing to the Councillor Portal some guidance for Councillors on personal internet blogging and use of social media is included on the Standards Committee Agenda at Agenda No: 1? In response to the Audit Recommendation 4 of the management Action Plan.*

#### **4.0 Assurance Statement**

- 4.1 Management can place Reasonable Assurance on the controls in place.

#### **5.0 Recommendation**

- 5.1 For information

#### **6.0 Decision Making Process**

6.1 For information

Contact Officer:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager and Monitoring Officer
Reporting to:	Sue McGonigal, Chief Executive

**Annexes**

**Annex 1** East Kent Audit Partnership Report: Members' Code of Conduct, Disclosure of Interests & Standards Arrangements