



Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority Code of Conduct Agenda Item 6

National Park Authority Board Meeting
13th June 2022

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1. Purpose

1.1. To present the revised Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority Code of Conduct, in line with the Model Code of Conduct (most recently reviewed and re-issued in December 2021) produced by the Standards Commission for Scotland, as required by the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. Members are requested to **approve** the revised Code of Conduct for subsequent approval by Scottish Government and adoption by the National Park Authority.

3. Contribution to National Park Partnership Plan and/or Our 5-year Plan

3.1. Ensuring that there is an up-to-date Code of Conduct, in line with Standards Commission for Scotland's Model Code is a cornerstone of good governance which underpins all Outcomes and Priorities of the National Park Partnership Plan and Our 5-year Plan 2018-23.

4. Background

4.1. The Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority Code of Conduct sets out the conduct that Board Members must adhere to. It is based on a Model Code

developed and published by the Standards Commission for Scotland (SCS). The SCS issued a revised Model Code in December 2021.

4.2. The main changes from the previous version of the Model Code (2014) are:

- 4.2.1. Now in first person
- 4.2.2. Provisions on respect strengthened
- 4.2.3. New provision on bullying and harassment
- 4.2.4. Gifts and hospitality provisions strengthened
- 4.2.5. New provision on collective responsibility
- 4.2.6. Provision on using position to seek preferential treatment
- 4.2.7. New requirement to register interests of close family members who have transactions with the public body
- 4.2.8. New three stage test for identifying and declaring interests
- 4.2.9. Provisions on lobbying and access simplified

4.3. The Scottish Government Public Bodies Unit wrote to Chairs of Devolved Public Bodies requiring individual bodies' adoption of the Model Code to have taken place by 10 June 2022. This deadline has been extended for Public Bodies holding Board Meetings close to this date, and we have the explicit permission of the SCS to submit our revised Code following our June 13th Board meeting.

4.4. Updated SCS Guidance on the new Model Code (Appendix 2) was issued at same time as new Model Code.

4.5. SCS held an online workshop on 23 March 2022 to discuss the Model Code and its implementation, which the National Park Authority's Board and Committee Manager attended.

4.6. As advised by SCS - in line with their expectations, and as has happened with previous versions of the Model Code, there are only minimal differences between the Model Code and our proposed updated Code of Conduct for the Board. The differences are:

- 4.6.1. References to "the Model Code" have been updated to "the Code".
- 4.6.2. References to "the public body" or "my public body" have been updated to "the National Park Authority".
- 4.6.3. Reference to the organisation's "Standards Officer" has been updated to "Proper Officer".

4.6.4. Annex C “*Protocol for Relations between Members and Staff*” has been added. This is part of the current Code of Conduct of the National Park Authority.

5. Risks

5.1. Having a robust Code of Conduct in place minimises the reputational and governance risks that could arise in the absence of clear guidelines.

6. Next steps

6.1. Once approved by the Board, the revised Code will be submitted to the Scottish Government Public Bodies Unit for their approval.

6.2. The revised Code of Conduct would then be officially adopted by the National Park Authority and published on our website.

6.3. In line with the update to the categories, all members will be asked to provide an initial update to their Register of Interests.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority Code of Conduct (Version: June 2022)

Appendix 2 – Model Code of Conduct Guidance

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