

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Review of the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations 27 June 2013

Report of the Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To enable the Committee to consider the amended Protocol on Member/Officer Relations, recommended by the Standards Committee for inclusion in the Constitution.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the amended Protocol on Member/Officer Relations appended to this report be approved for inclusion in the Constitution.**

1.0 Introduction

1.1 At its last meeting on the 14th March 2013, the Committee considered a report from the Chief Executive on officer advice to groups of members. A copy of the report is appended to this report at Appendix 1.

1.2 The Committee noted that the report was written following discussion with some members about the differences in briefing received by different political groups, depending on if and when information was requested by a political group. Information requested by one group was not routinely passed to others unless there was a request from that group for the information to be shared with others.

1.3 The Committee resolved as follows:

- (1) That the Standards Committee be requested to review the Protocol on Member / Officer Relations, which had changed little over the past ten years and was out of date.
- (2) That, as part of the review, the Standards Committee be recommended to ensure that the protocol was clear about how members could request that information provided to them by officers was also provided to other political groups on the council. This applied to both confidential and non-confidential information.

2.0 Proposal Details

- 2.1 At its meeting on the 25th April 2013, the Standards Committee considered an amended version of the Protocol, prepared by the Head of Governance as Monitoring Officer.
- 2.2 The current version of the Protocol is attached at Appendix 2, and the revised version, considered by the Standards Committee is at Appendix 3. For ease of reference Appendix 3 has the amendments tracked.
- 2.3 The Standards Committee recommended this Committee to approve the revised version at Appendix 3 for inclusion in the Constitution.

3.0 Details of Consultation

- 3.1 The Standards Committee's review was requested by this Committee.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

- 4.1 The options open to the Committee are to approve the revised Protocol, with or without amendments. If the Committee were minded to make significant amendments, it is recommended that these should be referred back to the Standards Committee for consideration

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The Standards Committee's recommendation is that the revised version of the Protocol at Appendix 3 be approved.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None arising directly from this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Protocol provides guidance, and is not legally enforceable.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources:

None

Information Services:

None

Property:

None

Open Spaces:

None

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The report has been prepared by the Monitoring Officer in her capacity as adviser to the Standards Committee and the officer responsible for the Constitution.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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