Cheltenham Borough Council

Standards Committee – 9 July 2010

Review of Protocol for Member/Officer Relations

Report of the Borough Solicitor & Monitoring Officer

1. Executive summary and recommendation

1.1 This report recommends a process whereby the Committee reviews the Protocol for Member/Officer Relations in accordance with the decision of the Council on the 22nd March 2010..

1.2 **It is recommended that the Committee adopts the process set out in paragraph 4.4 of this report in order to review the Council's Protocol for Member / Officer Relations.**

2. Summary of implications

2.1	**Financial**	None arising from this report Sarah Didcote 01242 264125 sarah.didcote@cheltenham.gov.uk
2.2	**Legal**	None arising from this report.
2.3	**Human Resources**	None arising from this report Julie McCarthy, HR Operations Manager 01242 264355 julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk
2.4	**Equal opportunities, social justice and anti-poverty**	None
2.5	**Environmental**	None
2.6	**Health and safety**	None

3. Background

3.1 On the 22nd March 2010 the Council approved Action Plans in response to recommendations made in a Public Interest issued by its auditors KPMG and recommendations made by a Working Group which had been set up to review the Council's recruitment, appointment and dispute resolution processes.

3.2 One of the approved actions was to "request the Standards Committee to review the Protocol for Member / Officer Relations to ensure that it reflects best practice" and the due date for this review by the Standards Committee is September 2010.

4. Proposals for Review

4.1 The Protocol for Member / Officer Relations was last reviewed by the Standards Committee in 2007 / 08 and was adopted by the Council on the 30th June 2008. The current Protocol, which is contained within the Constitution at Part 5C is attached as Appendix 1.

4.2 The review of the Protocol will be carried out in parallel with a review of the Council's Constitution which is being conducted by a Working Group of Members appointed by the Staff and Support Services Committee. The Working Group is assisting the Borough Solicitor to provide a report on the proposed revisions to the Constitution by the end of September 2010. This report will then be considered by the Staff and Support Services Committee which will make recommendations to the Council on any proposed revisions to the Constitution.

4.3 In order to ensure that any revisions to the Protocol for Member / Officer Relations which the Standards Committee may recommend can be formally considered at the same time as the report on other changes to the Constitution, it will be necessary for the Committee to complete its review in September. The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is on the 15th October 2010 and it is suggested that this be brought forward to September (date to be agreed by the Committee). On that basis, the process and timescale for review which is set out in paragraph 4.4 below is recommended to the Committee.

4.4 It is suggested that the Committee may wish to consider adopting the following process for reviewing the Council's Protocol for Member / Officer Relations.

Timescale	Action
By 31st July 2010	Invite views from all Members and from Senior Officers as to any amendments to the current Protocol which they consider may be appropriate.
July / August 2010	Borough Solicitor &Monitoring Officer to 1. Review examples of Local Authority best practice.

	2. Consider responses from Members & Officers.
September 2010	Borough Solicitor & Monitoring Officer to prepare revised draft Protocol taking into account the responses and examples of best practice and prepare report to Standards Committee.

Background papers   Cheltenham Borough Council's Protocol for Member / Officer Relations

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Appendices   Appendix 1 – Part 5C – Protocol for Member/Officer Relations