

Cheltenham Borough Council
Standards Committee – 16th April 2018
Review of Protocol of Member / Officer Relations

Accountable member	Cabinet Member, Corporate Services, Councillor Roger Whyborn
Accountable officer	Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
Key Decision	No
Executive summary	The Protocol for Member / Officer Relations which was adopted by the Council in 2010 has been reviewed and amended by the Standards Committee Working Group having consulted with all Members and relevant Officers. The Working Group has suggested changes to the Protocol to reflect changes to the Code of Members' conduct and to respond to points raised by Members and Officers as a result of the consultation. The draft amended Protocol for Member / Officer Relations is attached at Appendix 1 for approval by the Committee and recommendation to the Council.
Recommendations	That the Committee considers the revised Protocol for Member / Officer Relations attached at Appendix 1 and approves the amended Protocol for adoption by the Council.

Financial implications	There are no direct financial implications arising from the review Contact officer: Paul Jones, Executive Director Email: paul.jones@cheltenham.qcsx.gov.uk Tel No: 01242 775154
Legal implications	None arising from the review. Contact officer: Sara Freckleton, Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer Email: sara.freckleton@tewkesbury.gov.uk, Tel No: 01684 272011
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	Employees of the Council and employees from Publica Group working on behalf of the Council will need to be made aware of the revised Protocol and adhere to it. Contact officer: Julie McCarthy, HR Manager, Publica Group Ltd Email: julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel No: 07917534487

1. Background

- 1.1** The Protocol for Member / Officer Relations was adopted by the Council on 2010 and requires updating. The Standards Committee, sitting as a Working Group has undertaken a review of the Protocol.
- 1.2** All Members and the Council's Senior Leadership Team of Officers were invited to comment on the current Protocol and suggest changes to the Working Group either by written submissions or by attending a meeting of the Working Group to give their views.

- 1.3 There have been changes to the Code of Members' Conduct since 2010 and the Protocol required revision to bring it up to date in that respect.

2. Proposed Review of Protocol for Member / Officer Relations

- 2.1 The Working Group carefully considered all of the representations made by Members and Officers. Most of the feedback was that the Protocol was still, in the main, relevant and fit for purpose. There were a few points of detail which, it was considered, required amending. For example:-
- there is a paragraph (4.2) on Political Assistants and yet the Council had never employed Political Assistants. Consequently, it was recommended that this should be removed and reinstated if needed in future.
 - the section on Complaints (13) did not give an indication as to how the outcome of any referred complaints would be communicated. This has been re-worded in the draft attached at Appendix 1 to make the position clear.
- 2.2 In addition to the examples set out above, there have been a number of other wording changes to bring the document up to date but these do not substantially change or alter the substance of the Protocol.
- 2.3 In accordance with the wishes of the Working Group, the Trade Unions have been consulted on the revised document but have not submitted any comments.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure that the Protocol for Member / Officer Relations is up to date and fit for purpose.

4. Consultation and Feedback

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with all Members, the Officer Senior Leadership Team and with the Trade Unions as set out in the report.

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Appendices	Appendix 1 - Draft revised Protocol for Member/ Officer Relations
Background information	Cheltenham Borough Council Code of Members' Conduct Cheltenham Borough Council Protocol for Member / Officer Relations