

Audit Committee

30th September 2019



Report of: Service Director Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Title: Review of the Member Officer Protocol

Ward: Citywide

Officer presenting report: Tim O’Gara, Service Director Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Recommendation;

That the Committee approve the revised Member Officer Protocol.

Summary

In September 2018 the LGA Peer Review recommended that the effectiveness of the Member Officer Protocol should be reviewed. Officers have produced the attached amended Protocol in conjunction with the Values and Ethics Sub Committee of the Audit Committee.



1. Policy

Not applicable.

2. Consultation

Internal

The Mayor and Party Group Leaders
The Values and Ethics Sub Committee of the Audit Committee

External

Not applicable.

3. Context

In September 2018 the LGA peer review report commented:

“BCC should review its governance arrangements to ensure they are more effective in enabling good decision making. Specifically addressing:

a. forward plan arrangements to make them more transparent and open, ensuring information is shared in good time and used responsibly by all

b. structure, focus and impact of its Scrutiny arrangements

c. the effectiveness of the application of its member and officer protocol

Between members and officers, for the most part we saw and heard about respectful relationships. However, this was not universally so and in some areas we heard examples where the opposite was true. BCC has this year sought to direct attention to reviewing its protocol and using the opportunity of the development of the new values and behaviours to undertake development with the senior officers within the council. The council has a Member Development Steering Group which has prioritised the need for similar training for Members. The peer team would endorse this as an effective way of ensuring the councils values are shared, owned and understood across the political as well as officer side of the council.”

The Council’s Action plan in response specifies that the Monitoring officer will Review the Member Officer Protocol as part of the update to the Constitution.

Members are asked to approve the revised protocol, before it is taken to Full Council for adoption (provisional date 12th November 19).

4. Other Options Considered

None necessary.

5. Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

6. Legal and Resource Implications

As set out in the report.

7. Financial:

(a) Revenue

Not applicable.

(b) Capital

Not applicable.

Land/Property

Not applicable.

Human Resources

Not applicable.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Member Officer Protocol September 2019

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers: [LGA Corporate Peer Challenge 2018](#)