

Appendix 2

Extract Minute - Committee Model Working Group - 8 September 23

7. Member Officer Protocol

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services introduced the report and reminded Members that the Value and Ethics Subcommittee also has responsibility for signing off the Member Officer Protocol and the purpose of the report was to gather feedback from the CMWG to help inform their discussions. Councillors made the following comments/recommendations:

- **Paragraph 1.3.** The reference to the 'executive' had been included in error and would be amended.
- **Paragraph 4f.** The wording regarding Councillors advocating for their constituents should be changed to state as far as possible.
- **Paragraph 10.** The two sections split out between officers and members had the same indexing at the start which can cause confusion. This should be amended. Where there is mention of confidentiality, Members would like officers to make it clear in correspondence or verbal communication where something is confidential or not yet in the public domain. Additionally, Members were reminded that if they have any concerns regarding the conduct of officers, they should raise this in the first instance with the officer's line manager. If a satisfactory conclusion is not reached, then the Member should escalate to the Head of Human Resources, or the Monitoring Officer.
- **Paragraph 10b.** Members requested this wording be amended to refer to equality and inclusion.
- **Paragraph 10i.** Officers stated that 'Working in a Political Environment' training is delivered regularly to officers and had to date, been provided to over 1000 attendees.
- **Paragraph 21b.** The wording should be changed to 'where you feel an officer is best suited to respond'. This could be due to technical knowledge being required, or a press query etc. It was not intended to prevent Members from responding to constituents where appropriate.
- **Paragraph 21c.** Officers clarified that this paragraph meant that officers would not share information from a Councillor, with other Councillors, without consent and agreed this would be amended in the final report.
- **Paragraph 30.** Vice-Chairs is misspelled and will be corrected.
- **Paragraph 31.** Members recommended changing 'unauthorised' to 'unlawful', so it is clearer. Members also wanted to know why exposure to risk of legal action was only aimed at Members and not officers. The Monitoring Officer agreed to review this.
- **(Former) Paragraph 34.** The Committee were advised that the Scrutiny section had been deleted from the revised Member Officer Protocol because the function would no longer be delivered in the same way, but all relevant points would be included in the new Policy Committee Procedure Rules.

RESOLVED: That the comments from the Committee Model Working Group in relation to the Members Officer Protocol tracked changes version be relayed to the Values and Ethics Sub Committee.