

Constitution Part 5G - Protocol for Relationships between Members and Council Employees Protocol for Relationships Between Members and Council Employees

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PROTOCOL FOR RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MEMBERS AND COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

1. PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Members and Council employees must at all times observe this protocol. References to Council employees in this protocol include any member of staff, whether employed on a permanent or temporary basis, or seconded to or by the Council.
- 1.2 The Council's Standards Committee will monitor the operation of this protocol.
- 1.3 The protocol seeks to maintain and enhance the integrity (real and perceived) of local government, which demands the highest standards of personal conduct.
- 1.4 Members and Council employees must always respect the roles and duties of each other. They must show respect in all their dealings by observing reasonable standards and courtesy, and by not seeking to take unfair advantage by virtue of their position.
- 1.5 Whilst members and employees are indispensable to one another, their responsibilities are distinct. Members are accountable to the electorate and serve only as long as their term of office lasts. Employees are accountable to the Council as a whole. Their job is to give advice to members (individually and collectively) and to carry out the Council's work under the direction of the Council.
- 1.6 The Council has adopted codes of conduct for both members and Council employees. Both represent best practice. The members' code is based on the general principles governing members' conduct enshrined in law, namely:
 - Selflessness - serving only the public interest.
 - Honesty and integrity - not allowing these to be questioned; not behaving improperly.
 - Objectivity - taking decisions on merit.
 - Accountability - to the public; being open to scrutiny.
 - Openness - giving reasons for decisions.
 - Personal judgement - reaching one's own conclusions and acting accordingly.
 - Respect for others - promoting equality; avoiding discrimination; respecting others (member/member, as well as member/officer).
 - Duty to uphold the law - not acting unlawfully.
 - Stewardship - ensuring the prudent use of a council's resources.
 - Leadership - acting in a way which has public confidence.
- 1.7 Breaches of this protocol by a member may result in a complaint to the Standards Committee if it appears the members' code has also been breached. Breaches by an employee may lead to disciplinary action.

2. THE ROLE OF MEMBERS

- 2.1 Members have a number of roles and need to be alert to the potential for conflicts of interest which may arise between the roles. Where such conflicts are likely, members may wish to seek the advice of senior colleagues, the relevant senior staff, and/or the Monitoring Officer.
- 2.2 Collectively, members are the ultimate policy-makers determining the core values of the Council and approving the authority's policy framework, strategic plans and budget.
- 2.3 Members represent the community, act as community leaders and promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of the community often in partnership with other agencies.

- 2.4 Every elected member represents the interests of, and is an advocate for, his/her ward and individual constituents. He/she represents the Council in the ward, responds to the concerns of constituents, meets with partner agencies, and often serves on local bodies.
- 2.5 Some members have roles relating to their position as members of the Cabinet, overview and scrutiny committees or other committees and sub-committees of the Council.
- 2.6 Members of the Cabinet can have individual delegated powers. They may determine matters within their portfolios but implementation of their decisions is the responsibility of Council employees.
- 2.7 Members serving on scrutiny committees monitor the effectiveness of the Council's policies and services, develop policy proposals and examine community issues. They also monitor local health and crime service provision.
- 2.8 Members who serve on other committees and sub-committees collectively have delegated responsibilities, e.g. deciding quasi-judicial matters, which by law are excluded from the remit of the Executive.
- 2.9 Some members may be appointed to represent the Council on local, regional or national bodies.
- 2.10 As politicians, members may express the values and aspirations of the party political groups to which they belong, recognising that in their role as members they have a duty always to act in the public interest.
- 2.11 Members are not authorised to instruct employees other than:
- through the formal decision-making process;
 - to request the provision of consumable resources provided by the Council for members' use; and
 - where staff have been specifically allocated to give support to a member or group of members.
- 2.12 Members are not authorised to initiate or certify financial transactions, or to enter into a contract on behalf of the Council.
- 2.13 Members must avoid taking actions which are unlawful, financially improper or likely to amount to maladministration. Members have an obligation under their code of conduct to have a regard, when reaching decisions, to any advice provided by the Monitoring Officer or the Section 151 Officer.
- 2.14 Members must respect the impartiality of employees and do nothing to compromise it, e.g. by insisting that an employee change his/her professional advice.
- 2.15 Members have a duty under their code of conduct:
- to promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and
 - to treat others with respect.
- 2.16 Under the code, a member must not, when acting as a member:
- bring the Council or his/her position as a member into disrepute, or
 - use his/her position as a member improperly to gain an advantage or disadvantage for his/herself or any other person.

3. THE ROLE OF COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

- 3.1 Council employees are responsible for giving advice to members to enable them to fulfil their roles. In doing so, employees will take into account all available relevant factors.
- 3.2 Under the direction and control of the Council (including, as appropriate, the Cabinet, committees and sub-committees), Council employees manage and provide the Council's services within the framework of responsibilities delegated to them. This includes the effective management of employees and operational issues.
- 3.3 Employees have a duty to implement decisions of the Council, the Cabinet, committees and sub-committees which are lawful, and which have been properly approved in accordance with the requirements of the law and the Council's constitution, and duly recorded.
- 3.4 Employees have a contractual and legal duty to be impartial. They must not allow their professional judgement and advice to be influenced by their own personal views.
- 3.5 Council employees must assist and advise all parts of the Council. They must always act to the best of their abilities in the best interests of the authority as expressed in the Council's formal decisions.
- 3.6 Council employees must be alert to issues which are, or likely to be, contentious or politically sensitive, and be aware of the implications for members, the media or other sections of the public.
- 3.7 Employees have the right not to support members in any role other than that of member, and not to engage in actions incompatible with this protocol. In particular, there is a statutory limitation on Council employees' involvement in political activities.

4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEMBERS AND COUNCIL EMPLOYEES: GENERAL

- 4.1 The conduct of members and Council employees should be such as to instil mutual confidence and trust.
- 4.2 The key elements are recognition of and a respect for each other's roles and responsibilities. These should be reflected in the behaviour and attitude of each to the other, both publicly and privately.
- 4.3 Informal and collaborative two-way contact between members and employees is encouraged. However, personal familiarity can damage the relationship, as might a family or business connection.
- 4.4 Members and Council employees should inform the Monitoring Officer of any relationship which might be seen as unduly influencing their work in their respective roles.
- 4.5 It is not enough to avoid actual impropriety. Members and Council employees should always be open about their relationships to avoid any reason for suspicion and any appearance of improper conduct. Where a personal relationship has been disclosed, those concerned should avoid a situation where conflict could be perceived. Specifically, a member should not sit on a body or participate in any decision which directly affects the officer on a personal basis.
- 4.6 Employees serve the Council as a whole. They have a duty to implement the properly authorised decisions of the Council.

- 4.7 Council employees work to the instructions of senior staff, not individual members. It follows that, whilst such employees will always seek to assist a member, they must not be asked to exceed the bounds of authority they have been given by their managers. Except when the purpose of an enquiry is purely to seek factual information, members should normally direct their requests and concerns to a senior member of staff, at least in the first instance.
- 4.8 Council employees will do their best to give timely responses to members' enquiries. However, employees should not have unreasonable requests placed on them. Their work priorities are set and managed by senior managers. Members should avoid disrupting employees' work by imposing their own priorities.
- 4.9 Members will endeavour to give timely responses to enquiries from Council employees.
- 4.10 A Council employee shall not discuss with a member personal matters concerning him/herself or another individual employee. This does not prevent an employee raising on a personal basis, and in his/her own time, a matter with his/her ward member.
- 4.11 Members and employees should respect each other's free (i.e. non-Council) time.

5. THE COUNCIL AS EMPLOYER

- 5.1 Council employees are employed by the Council as a whole.
- 5.2 In relation to employment matters, members' roles are limited to:
- the appointment of specified senior posts,
 - determining human resources policies and conditions of employment, and
 - hearing and determining appeals.
- 5.3 Members shall not act outside these roles.
- 5.4 If participating in the appointment of senior employees, members should:
- remember that the sole criterion is merit,
 - never canvass support for a particular candidate,
 - not take part where one of the candidates is a close friend or relative,
 - not be influenced by personal preferences, and
 - not favour a candidate by giving him/her information not available to other candidates.
- 5.5 A member should not sit on an appeal hearing if the appellant is a friend, a relative, or an employee with whom the member has had a working relationship.

6. MAYOR AND COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

- 6.1 Council employees will respect the position of Mayor and provide appropriate support.

7. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

- 7.1 Executive Members will take decisions in accordance with the constitution and will not otherwise direct staff. Directors will be responsible for instructing staff to implement the Executive's decisions.

- 7.2 In addition to individual members of the Executive, Directors (including the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer) have the right to submit papers to the Executive Members for consideration.
- 7.3 Directors, and Executive Members shall agree mutually convenient methods of regular contact. Before taking any formal decisions, the Executive will seek appropriate professional advice including, without exception, that of the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer.
- 7.4 Before any formal decisions with a financial implication are taken by the Executive, the Director of Resources and Director(s) for the service(s) concerned must be consulted. This is to ensure that those Council employees who are budget holders:
- are aware of the proposed decision,
 - have the opportunity to offer advice, and
 - are subsequently able properly to authorise the financial transactions needed to implement decisions.
- 7.5 Executive Members when making decisions (whether collectively or individually) must state the reason for those decisions. The written record of the decisions must include the reasons.
- 7.6 Directors taking decisions under their delegated powers must consider the advisability of informing the relevant Cabinet member(s) of their intentions in advance when the matter to which the decisions relates is likely to be sensitive or contentious, or has wider policy implications.

8. SCRUTINY MEMBERS AND COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

- 8.1 Chairs and other leading scrutiny members shall maintain regular contact with the staff providing the principal support to the scrutiny function. In consultation with chairs, it shall be the responsibility of the latter to ensure that those who need to know of matters being considered or for possible future consideration are so informed.
- 8.2 A scrutiny committee or its chair acting on its behalf may require Council employees to attend scrutiny meetings. Members should not normally expect junior employees to give evidence. All requests should be made to Directors in the first instance.
- 8.3 When making requests for officer attendance, scrutiny members shall have regard to the workload of Council employees.
- 8.4 It is recognised that employees required to appear before a scrutiny committee may often be those who have advised the Executive or another part of the Council on the matter under investigation. In these circumstances, an officer may have a conflict of interest. Both members and employees need to consider the severity of the conflict and if deemed appropriate, research and advice may be sought elsewhere.
- 8.5 Subject to 8.4 above, Council employees should be prepared to justify advice given to the Council, the Executive, or other committees and sub-committees even when the advice was not accepted.
- 8.6 Employees must also be prepared to justify decisions they have taken under delegated powers.
- 8.7 In giving evidence, Employees must not be asked to give political views.
- 8.8 Council employees should respect members in the way they respond to members' questions.

- 8.9 Members should not question Council employees in a way which could be interpreted as harassment, nor should they ask about matters of a disciplinary nature.
- 8.10 Scrutiny proceedings must not be used to question the capability or competence of any employees. Chairs and members need to make a distinction between reviewing the policies and performance of the Council and its services, and appraising the personal performance of staff. The latter is not a scrutiny function.
- 8.11 In exercising the right to call-in a decision of the Executive, scrutiny members must have regard to the advice of the Monitoring Officer if they are minded to consider the decision is contrary to the Council's approved plans, policies or frameworks, or is unlawful.

9. MEMBERS OF OTHER COMMITTEES OR SUB-COMMITTEES AND COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

- 9.1 The appropriate senior employees will offer to arrange regular informal meetings with chairs, vice-chairs, and spokespersons of committees and sub-committees.
- 9.2 Directors (including the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer) have the right to present reports and give advice to committees and sub-committees.
- 9.3 Members of a committee or sub-committee shall take decisions within the remit of that committee or sub-committee, and will not otherwise instruct Council employees to act.
- 9.4 At some committee or sub-committee meetings, a resolution may be passed which authorises a named member of staff to take action between meetings after consultation with the chair. In these circumstances it is that employee, not the chair, who takes the action and is responsible for it. A chair has no legal power to take decisions on behalf of a committee or sub-committee, neither should he/she apply inappropriate pressure on the employee.

10. CONDUCT OF MEMBERS AT ALL MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

- 10.1 Members must not make a personal attack on any Council employee in any public forum, including a meeting of the Council.
- 10.2 In the event that a Member has a criticism of an employee, that Member should first contact them directly and give them the opportunity to answer the criticism and address any issues.
- 10.3 In the event that the above action does not resolve the matter, the member should contact the employee's line manager for resolution of the matter.
- 10.4 If that action is unsuccessful, the appropriate Director should be contacted. If necessary the matter may also be escalated to the Chief Executive.

11. PARTY GROUPS AND COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

- 11.1 Directors may properly be asked to contribute to deliberations of matters concerning Council business by party groups.
- 11.2 Directors have the right to refuse such requests, and will normally not attend a meeting of a party group where some of those attending are not members of the Council.

- 11.3 Employee support will not extend beyond providing factual information or professional advice in relation to matters of Council business. Council employees must not be involved in advising on matters of party business, and therefore should not be expected to be present at meetings or parts of meetings when such matters are discussed.
- 11.4 Party group meetings are not empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Council, and conclusions reached at such meetings do not rank as formal decisions. The presence of an employee confers no formal status on such meetings in terms of Council business and must not be interpreted as doing so.
- 11.5 Where Council employees provide factual information and advice to a party group in relation to a matter of Council business, this is not a substitute for providing all the necessary information and advice when the matter in question is formally considered by the relevant part of the Council.
- 11.6 It must not be assumed that an employee is supportive of a particular policy or view considered at a party group meeting simply because he/she has attended or provided information to the meeting.
- 11.7 Council employees will respect the confidentiality of any party group discussions at which they are present and, unless requested to do so by that party group, will not relay the content of such discussions to another party group or to any other members. This shall not prevent an employee providing feedback to other members or to other senior Council employees on a need-to-know basis.
- 11.8 In their dealings with party groups, Council employees must treat each group in a fair and even-handed manner.
- 11.9 Members must not do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise an employees' impartiality.
- 11.10 The duration of an employee's attendance at a party group meeting will be at the discretion of the group, but the employee may leave at any time if they feel it is no longer appropriate to be there.
- 11.11 An employee accepting an invitation to the meeting of one party group shall not decline an invitation to advise another group about the same matter. They must give substantially the same advice to each.
- 11.12 A Council employee who is not a Director shall not be invited to attend a party group meeting, but a Director may nominate another employee to attend on their behalf.
- 11.13 An employee should be given the opportunity of verifying comments and advice attributed to them in any written record of a party group meeting.
- 11.14 No member will refer in public or at meetings of the Council to advice or information given by Council employees to a party group meeting.
- 11.15 At party group meetings where some of those present are not members of the Council, care must be taken not to divulge confidential information relating to Council business. Persons who are not members are not bound by the members' code of conduct. They do not have the same rights to Council information as members.
- 11.16 Any particular cases of difficulty or uncertainty in relation to this part of the protocol should be raised with the Chief Executive and the relevant party group leader.

12. LOCAL MEMBERS AND COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

- 12.1 To enable them to carry out their ward role effectively, members need to be fully informed about matters affecting their ward. Senior Council employees must ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the requirement to keep local members informed, thus allowing members to contribute to the decision-making process and develop their representative role.
- 12.2 This requirement is particularly important:
- during the formative stages of policy development, where practicable,
 - in relation to significant or sensitive operational matters,
 - whenever any form of public consultation exercise is undertaken, and
 - during an overview and scrutiny investigation.
- 12.3 Issues may affect a single ward. Where they have a wider impact, a number of local members will need to be kept informed.
- 12.4 Whenever a public meeting is organised by the Council to consider a local issue, all the members representing the wards affected should be invited to attend the meeting as a matter of course.
- 12.5 If a local member intends to arrange a public meeting on a matter concerning some aspect of the Council's work, he/she should inform the relevant Director. Provided the meeting has not been arranged on a party political basis:
- a Director may attend but is not obliged to do so, and
 - the meeting may be held in council-owned premises.
- 12.6 No such meetings should be arranged or held in the immediate run-up to Council elections (i.e. after the publication of the Notice of Election).
- 12.7 Whilst support for members' ward work is legitimate, care should be taken if Council employees are asked to accompany members to ward surgeries. In such circumstances:
- the surgeries must be open to the general public, and
 - Council employees should not be requested to accompany members to surgeries held in the offices or premises of political parties.
- 12.8 Council employees must never be asked to attend ward or constituency political party meetings.
- 12.9 It is acknowledged that some Council employees (e.g. those providing dedicated support to Executive members) may receive and handle messages for members on topics unrelated to the Council. Whilst these will often concern diary management, care should be taken to avoid Council resources being used for private or party political purposes.
- 12.10 In seeking to deal with constituents' queries or concerns, members should not seek to jump the queue but should respect the Council's procedures. Council employees have many pressures on their time. They may not be able to carry out the work required by members in the requested timescale, and may need to seek instructions from their managers.

13. MEMBERS' ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

- 13.1 This part of the protocol should be read in conjunction with the Access to Information Rules in the Council's constitution.

- 13.2 Members may request senior Council employees to provide them with such information, explanation and advice as they may reasonably need to assist them to discharge their roles as members. This may range from general information about some aspect of the Council's services to specific information on behalf of a constituent. Where information is required on behalf of a third party, it will only be provided if:
- it is in the public domain, and
 - it is not exempted by the Data Protection Act or the Freedom of Information Act from being given.
- 13.3 Every member of the Executive, a scrutiny committee, and/or any other committee or sub-committee has a right to inspect documents about the business of that scrutiny committee, other committee or sub-committee or the Executive.
- 13.4 A member who is not a member of a specific scrutiny committee, other committee or sub-committee, or the Executive may have access to any document of that specific part of the Council provided:
- he/she can demonstrate a reasonable need to see the documents in order to carry out his/her roles as a member (the "need to know" principle), and
 - the documents do not contain "confidential" or "exempt" information as defined by the law.
- 13.5 Disputes as to the validity of a member's request to see a document on a need to know basis will be determined by the Monitoring Officer. Council employees should seek their advice if in any doubt about the reasonableness of a member's request.
- 13.6 A member should obtain advice from the Monitoring Officer in circumstances where they wish to have access to documents or information:
- where to do so is likely to be in breach of the Data Protection Act or the Freedom of Information Act, or
 - where the subject matter is one in which they have a personal or prejudicial interest as defined in the members' code of conduct.
- 13.7 Information given to a member must only be used for the purpose for which it was requested.
- 13.8 It is an accepted convention that a member of one party group will not have a need to know and therefore a right to inspect a document which forms part of the internal workings of another party group.
- 13.9 Members and Council employees must not disclose information given to them in confidence without the consent of a person authorised to give it, or unless required by law to do so.
- 13.10 When requested to do so, employees will keep confidential from other member's advice requested by a member.
- 13.11 Members and Council employees must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that is entitled by law.

14. MEDIA RELATIONS

- 14.1 All formal relations with the media must be conducted in accordance with the Council's agreed procedures and the law on local authority publicity.

- 14.2 Press releases or statements made by Council employees must promote or give information on Council policy or services. They will be factual and consistent with Council policy. They cannot be used to promote a party group.
- 14.3 Employees will keep relevant members informed of media interest in the Council's activities, especially regarding strategic or contentious matters.
- 14.4 Before responding to enquiries from the media, employees shall ensure they are authorised to do so.
- 14.5 Likewise, Council employees will inform the Council's Communications Team of issues likely to be of media interest, since that unit is often the media's first point of contact.
- 14.6 If a member is contacted by, or contacts, the media on an issue, he/she should:
- indicate in what capacity he/she is speaking (e.g. as ward member, in a personal capacity, as a Cabinet member, on behalf of the Council, or on behalf of a party group);
 - be sure of what he/she wants to say or not to say;
 - if necessary, and always when he/she would like a press release to be issued, seek assistance from the Council's Media and Communications Team and/or relevant Director, except in relation to a statement which is party political in nature;
 - consider the likely consequences for the Council of his/her statement (e.g. commitment to a particular course of action, image, allegations of jumping to conclusions);
 - never give a commitment in relation to matters which may be subject to claims from third parties and/or are likely to be an insurance matter;
 - consider whether to consult other relevant members; and
 - take particular care in what he/she says in the run-up to local or national elections to avoid giving the impression of electioneering, unless he/she has been contacted as an election candidate or political party activist.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

- 15.1 Correspondence between an individual member and an employee should not be copied to another member unless the author expressly intends and states that this is the case or consents. Where correspondence is copied, this should always be made explicit, i.e. there should be no "blind" copies.
- 15.2 Official letters written on behalf of the Council should normally be in the name of the relevant Council employee. It may be appropriate in some circumstances (e.g. representations to a Government Minister) for letters to appear in the name of an Executive member or the chairman of a scrutiny committee.
- 15.3 The Mayor may initiate correspondence in his/her own name.
- 15.4 Letters which create legally enforceable obligations or which give instructions on behalf of the Council should never be sent in the name of a member.
- 15.5 When writing in an individual capacity as a ward member, a member must make clear that fact.

16. ACCESS TO PREMISES

- 16.1 Council employees have the right to enter Council land and premises to carry out their work. Some Council employees have the legal power to enter property in the ownership of others.
- 16.2 Members have a right of access to Council land and premises to fulfil their duties.
- 16.3 When making visits as individual members, members should:
- whenever practicable, notify and make advance arrangements with the appropriate manager or member of staff in charge;
 - comply with health and safety, security and other workplace rules;
 - not interfere with the services or activities being provided at the time of the visit;
 - if outside his/her own ward, notify the ward member(s) beforehand; and
 - take special care at schools and establishments serving vulnerable sections of society to avoid giving any impression of improper or inappropriate behaviour.

17. USE OF COUNCIL RESOURCES

- 17.1 The Council provides all members with services such as typing, printing and photocopying, and goods such as stationary and computer equipment, to assist them in discharging their roles as members of the Council. These goods and services are paid for from the public purse. They must not be used for private purposes or in connection with party political or campaigning activities.
- 17.2 Members should ensure they understand and comply with the Council's own rules about the use of such resources, particularly:
- where facilities are provided in members' homes at the Council's expense;
 - in relation to any locally-agreed arrangements e.g. payment for private photocopying; and
 - regarding ICT security.
- 17.3 Members should not put pressure on staff to provide resources or support which Council employees are not permitted to give. Examples are:
- business which is solely to do with a political party;
 - work in connection with a ward or constituency party political meeting;
 - electioneering;
 - work associated with an event attended by a member in a capacity other than as a member of the Council;
 - private personal correspondence;
 - work in connection with another body or organisation where a member's involvement is other than as a member of the Council; and
 - support to a member in his/her capacity as a Councillor of another local authority.

18. INTERPRETATION, COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS OF BREACHES OF THIS PROTOCOL

- 18.1 Members or Council employees with questions about the implementation or interpretation of any part of this protocol should seek the guidance of the Monitoring Officer.

- 18.2 A member who is unhappy about the actions taken by, or conduct of, an employee should:
- avoid personal attacks on, or abuse of, the employee at all times,
 - ensure that any criticism is well founded and constructive,
 - never make a criticism in public, and
 - take up the concern with the employee privately.
- 18.3 If direct discussion with the member of staff is inappropriate (e.g. because of the seriousness of the concern) or fails to resolve the matter, the member should raise the issue with the employee's manager or the relevant Director.
- 18.5 A serious breach of this protocol by a Council employee may lead to an investigation under the Council's disciplinary procedure.
- 18.6 An employee who believes a member may have acted other than in accordance with this protocol should raise their concern with the Monitoring Officer. They will consider how the complaint or allegation should be dealt with. At a minor level, this may be no more than informally referring the matter to the leader of the relevant party group. More serious complaints may involve alleged breaches of the members' code of conduct, and may be referred to the Standards Committee.

Definitions

- a) Unless the context indicates otherwise, references to the term Council include the Executive, scrutiny committees, and all other committees and sub-committees.
- b) For the purposes of this protocol, the term Executive refers to the Leader and Cabinet.
- c) Unless the context indicates otherwise, the terms member and members include non-elected (i.e. co-opted) members as well as elected Councillors.
- d) Council employees and staff mean all persons employed by the Council in any capacity.
- e) Chief Finance Officer means the officer exercising the duties prescribed by law for the financial administration of the Council.