



STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 23RD NOVEMBER 2023

SUBJECT: MEMBER PROTOCOL ON INVOLVEMENT IN OTHER WARDS

REPORT BY: HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To make Standards Committee aware of the recently adopted Member Protocol on Involvement in Other Wards.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The protocol is designed to provide a simple process when a resident asks a member from a different ward to act on their behalf. The protocol only deals with 'local issues', meaning issues within a ward and not wider.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To note the introduction of the Member Protocol on Involvement in Other Wards.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Standards Committee has a role to play in ensuring members adhere to the requirements of the Protocol. Repeated breaches of the protocol could lead to a complaint to the Standards Committee.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 At its annual meeting in May earlier this year, the Council decided to adopt a protocol on when members may act for residents from another ward. The protocol is attached as an appendix to the report.
- 5.2 One of key roles of a member set out in Article 2 in part 2 of the Council's Constitution is that they will *effectively represent the interests of their electoral division and individual constituents*. The principal is that members should represent the members of the public from their own wards. There should be sufficient queries and requests for help from their own constituents without having to act for individuals from other wards. As the protocol describes in paragraph 1.2, *if the involvement in another ward is because of a direct approach by a resident, this is potentially contentious*.

- 5.3 However, the protocol sets out a simple process for dealing with this situation. In paragraph 3 of the protocol, it says that where a resident approaches a non-ward member about 'a local issue' (defined as an issue within a ward and not wider), the non-ward member should explain to the resident that they are not the local member and refer them to the local members to deal with the issue. If the resident does not want their local member to represent them then the non-ward member should inform the local members of their involvement. Further the non-ward member should provide a signed authority from the resident to the relevant Head of Service that they wish the non-ward member to act on their behalf.
- 5.4 The protocol says that the member needs to notify the Monitoring officer where they act outside their own ward. This will then be reported in the annual report of the Standards Committee to the annual meeting of Council in May.
- 5.5 Where members are acting contrary to the protocol, the issue will be flagged up with the group leader. Repeated breaches of the protocol may lead to a complaint to the Standards Committee.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 There are no assumptions contained in this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 As this report is for information only there is no requirement for an Integrated Impact Assessment to be completed.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

- 10.1 Any consultation responses have been reflected within the body of the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Act 2000

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