

Report to: Governance, General Purposes & LGR Committee – 16 April 2026

Lead Officer: Francesca Whyley, Monitoring Officer

Report Summary	
Report Title	Update from Governance, General Purposes & LGR Working Group – Member/Officer Protocol
Purpose of Report	To update Members on the work undertaken by the Working Group to update the Member Officer Protocol
Recommendations	That the Governance, General Purposes & LGR Committee recommend the updated Member/Officer Protocol at Appendix 1 to Full Council for adoption.
Reason for Recommendations	<p>a) To keep Committee updated as to the work undertaken by the Working group in reviewing the above documents; and</p> <p>b) To ensure up to date Member/Officer Protocol in line with the Local Government Association guidance.</p>

1.0 Background

1.1 In November, this Committee agreed to establish a Working Group to review the following documents:

- Council Arrangements for dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints
- Social Media Protocol for Members
- Member/Officer Protocol
- Member Development Plan

At its meeting on 5 February, Committee reviewed and approved or recommended approval for three of the documents listed. This report relates to the Member/Officer Protocol which has now been reviewed, updated and shared with the Working group for consideration.

1.2 The Working Group included Councillor Linda Dales (Chair), Councillor Penny Rainbow, Councillor Andy Freeman, Councillor Paul Peacock, Councillor Kay Smith and Councillor Jean Hall. The document at **Appendix 1** was shared with the Working Group for consideration.

1.3 The Member/Officer Protocol has been significantly altered from the current version contained within the constitution. The changes have been made having regard to the Local Government Association Guidance on Member/Officer protocols and provides clear guidance on the distinction between the role of officers and the role of members and some practical examples of the dos and don'ts of member/officer relationships.

- 1.4 The guidance has been developed having regard to member and officer Code's of Conduct and provides a clear explanation as to the importance of good member/officer relations and the significance of good relations in ensuring strong governance.

2.0 Proposal /Options Considered

- 2.1 It is proposed that Members note the work undertaken by the Working Group in reviewing this protocol. The engagement from the group was key to ensure the documents were fit for purpose.
- 2.2 It is proposed that Members recommend to Full Council the adoption of the updated Member/Officer Protocol at Appendix1. The Committee could choose not to agree the updates or propose additional changes; however, the document has been developed in full consultation with officers and the Working Group and the amendments proposed are considered sound.
- 2.3 It should be noted that this Protocol along with the Social Media Protocol and Corporate Code of Governance (if approved) will be presented to Full Council for final approval as part of the annual update of the Constitution.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Implications Considered			
Yes – relevant and included / NA – not applicable			
Financial	NA	Equality & Diversity	Yes
Human Resources	Yes	Human Rights	NA
Legal	Yes	Data Protection	NA
Digital & Cyber Security	NA	Safeguarding	NA
Sustainability	NA	Crime & Disorder	NA
LGR	NA	Tenant Consultation	NA

Legal and HR Implications

- 3.1 Whilst Local Authorities are not legally required to agree a protocol on member-officer relations it is recognised as good practice and most authorities have adopted such a protocol including Newark and Sherwood District Council and neighbouring district and borough councils.
- 3.2 The protocol has been drafted having regard to other statutory provisions in relation to member conduct (Localism Act 2011), the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 which provides clarity on the role of statutory officers and political restrictions with regard to those posts and the Equality Act 2010 which sets out the public sector equality duty and the requirement of authorities to eliminate discrimination and advance equality in their decisions.

3.3 The protocol has been prepared in consultation with HR.

Financial Implications

3.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from the approval of this protocol.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

[Good practice guidance on member-officer relations protocols | Local Government Association](#)