



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES – MR CRAIG GRIFFITHS

14th October 2024

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All Wards

Member Officer Protocol

Purpose of the Report:

1. To consider an updated draft of the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Protocol on Member and Officer Relationships

Background:

2. Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Members have adopted a Protocol on Member and Officer Relationships (a copy of which is enclosed at Appendix 1 of this Report).
3. The purpose of this Protocol is to guide Members and Employees of the Council in their relations with one another.

4. Mutual respect between Members and Employees is essential to good local government. However, close personal familiarity between individual Members and Employees can damage this relationship and prove embarrassing to other Members and Employees.
5. The relationship has to function without compromising the ultimate responsibilities of Employees to the Council as a whole, and with due regard to such technical, financial, professional and legal advice that Employees can legitimately provide to Members. The Protocol seeks to set a framework that assists the working relationships between Members and Employees.
6. It is hoped that, by following good practice and securing sensible and practical working relationships between Members and Employees, we can provide one of the cornerstones of a successful local authority and thereby enhance the delivery of high value quality services to the people of the Neath Port Talbot locality. Mutual understanding, openness and respect are the greatest safeguard of the integrity of the Council, its Members and Employees.
7. Consideration has been given to updating the current iteration of the protocol following some benchmarking against other local authorities and accordingly an updated draft is attached for members to consider,
8. The protocol covers a number of different areas
 - (a) The role of members;
 - (b) The role of officers/employees of the Council;
 - (c) Dealing with disputes;
 - (d) Respect and courtesy
 - (e) Provision of advice and information to members
 - (f) The relationship between officers and members
 - (g) Confidentiality

- (h) Provision of support services
- (i) Political restrictions

Financial Impacts:

9. No implications.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

10. An Integrated Impact Assessment is not required for this report.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

11. No implications

Workforce Impacts:

12. No implications

Legal Impacts:

13. There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

Consultation:

14. There is no requirement for external consultation on this item

Recommendations:

15. That Members consider the draft updated Member Officer Protocol enclosed at Appendix 1 and comment accordingly prior to further consideration by elected members and onward approval at Full Council.

Reason for Decision

16. To ensure appropriate governance arrangements are in place to reflect the relationship between elected officials and officers of the Council.

Appendices:

17. Appendix 1 – Draft Updated Member Officer Protocol

List of Background Papers:

18. None

Officer Contact:

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