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MEETING	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
DATE	23 JANUARY 2009
PRESENT	MRS BAINTON (INDEPENDENT MEMBER, IN THE CHAIR), CLLRS HORTON (VICE-CHAIR), WAUDBY, HUDSON AND TAYLOR (CYC MEMBERS) MR DIXON AND MR HALL (INDEPENDENT MEMBERS) CLLRS CRAWFORD, MELLORS AND FORSTER (PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS)
APOLOGIES	MR WILSON (INDEPENDENT MEMBER)

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## 27. REVIEW OF THE PROTOCOL ON OFFICER/MEMBER RELATIONS

Members considered a report which presented details of the review of the Officer / Member Protocol currently in place at City of York Council and suggested amendments to the current Protocol.

The review formed part of the actions arising from the findings of the recent Ethical Governance Health Check carried out with the Audit Commission. Other actions had included two awareness-raising sessions for Members and Officers.

A draft amended version of the current protocol was attached at Annex A to the report. Protocols from a number of other authorities were also provided, at Annexes B-E, for the purpose of comparison. Members were invited to decide whether to:

- Retain the existing Protocol unaltered (Option A)
- Agree an amended draft version of the Protocol, based on the existing one, and instruct the Monitoring Officer to undertake a consultation exercise on the resulting document (Option B) or
- Agree a set of criteria to enable a complete re-draft of the existing Protocol (Option C).

RESOLVED: (i) That Option B be approved.

(ii) That the following amendments be agreed to the revised draft Protocol at Annex A:<sup>1</sup>

- a) In the introduction, include reference to those Officers with certain responsibilities in law and add 'Whistleblowing Policy' to the list of documents in para. 1.2.
- b) In para. 3.1 add compliance with the Officer Code of Conduct to the list of what Members can expect from Officers.

- c) In para. 4.2, delete the words '*should, therefore, be avoided*' in the last line and substitute '*Therefore care should be exercised*'.
- d) Clarify the content of para. 4.3
- e) In para 4.4, include reference to the information on confidential documents etc. in paras. 7.1 and 7.2 and in the last line change '*will*' to '*may*'.
- f) Remove para. 5.6.
- g) Re-word paras. 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 to reflect recent changes to legislation (in particular, the Freedom of Information Act).
- h) In para. 8.2, include reference to electronic / e-mail communication.

(iii) That, having made the above amendments, the Monitoring Officer be instructed to undertake a consultation exercise based upon the proposed draft document (as amended) and to report the results of that consultation back to the Committee in due course.<sup>2</sup>

(iv) That the consultation be carried out with Group Leaders, Group Secretaries, Directors and Trades Unions.<sup>2</sup>

REASON: In order to agree a more effective Member / Officer Protocol for City of York Council and to respond to the issues raised during the Ethical Governance Health Check.

Action Required

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| 1. Make the agreed amendments to the draft revised Protocol | GR |
| 2. Carry out consultation as agreed                         | GR |