

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

11TH DECEMBER 2008

REVIEW OF PROTOCOL ON RELATIONS BETWEEN MEMBERS

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Cllr Roger Smith
Responsible Head of Service	Claire Felton, Monitoring Officer
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Standards Committee is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the Council's Protocol on Relations between Members on an ongoing basis. The Committee is requested to consider how to undertake such a review.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Members decide how to conduct the review of the Protocol on Relations between Members.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Protocol on Relations between Members forms Part 19 of the Council's Constitution and a copy of it is attached to this report as Appendix 1. There is no legal requirement to have such a Code or Protocol but it was drafted about 2 years ago in the context of issues which were arising at the time. Few other authorities have such a protocol.
- 3.2 The key function of the Protocol is to give guidance on developing mutual respect between Members. It includes a section on how disputes between Members might be resolved, which involves resolution between Group Leaders.
- 3.3 During recent months a number of issues have arisen between Members and the Protocol has been increasingly relied upon.
- 3.4 This is the first occasion on which this Protocol has been reviewed either by the Standards Committee or any other person or body, and no process or precedent exists as to how to go about this. Members are therefore requested to consider how to conduct this review. It is suggested that the Committee might find it helpful to request Members and Officers to provide evidence for the Committee to consider and to invite views from Members and Officers as to how the Protocol might be improved.

- 3.5 Members may also wish to consider investigating the processes used by other authorities or to consider model Protocols prepared by ACSeS (the Association of County Secretaries and Solicitors) or LACORS (Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services) or similar organisations.
- 3.6 The Committee needs to consider how to go about gathering and then reviewing this information. Bearing in mind that relations between Members have been highlighted in the past by the Audit Commission as a key area for improvement for this Council, this is an important and potentially high-profile task which the Committee needs to ensure is undertaken appropriately. There are a number of options;
- 3.6.1 Officers could be requested to undertake research and gather the views of key Members and Officers and prepare a report for consideration by the Standards Committee;
 - 3.6.2 in addition to the above, key Members and senior Officers could be requested to attend before the full Standards Committee to provide information; or
 - 3.6.3 the Committee might consider it more appropriate to form small working groups each of which would conduct one or more interviews or carry out specific pieces of research and then report back to the Standards Committee.
- 3.7 Members are requested to consider how to conduct this review.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 This item does not link directly to any of the Council's objectives.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

There are no significant risks associated with this report.

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None.

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None

11. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Procurement Issues	None
Personnel Implications	None
Governance/Performance Management	None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998	None
Policy	None
Environmental	None

12. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	No
Executive Director - Services	Yes
Assistant Chief Executive	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

13. WARDS AFFECTED

All

14. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Protocol on Relations between Members

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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