

MEETING OF	STANDARDS COMMITTEE
DATE	27 JANUARY 2014
SUBJECT	THE PROTOCOL FOR MEMBER/OFFICER RELATIONS
PURPOSE	TO CONSIDER AMENDMENTS TO THE PROTOCOL
AUTHOR	DILYS PHILLIPS, MONITORING OFFICER

1. At its annual meeting in May 2014 the Council will consider adopting a new Constitution. This Constitution will be drawn up based on the Standard Modular Constitution that has been prepared for all Welsh Councils.
2. One of the documents that make up the Council's Constitution is the Protocol for Member/Officer Relations.
3. The Standards Committee considered this Protocol on 23 June 2009 recommending some amendments to the Protocol that existed at the time. The Council adopted those amendments at its meeting in July 2009.
4. The purpose of the Protocol is to control the contact and the relationship between the Council's members and officers. It includes matters relating to conduct, but also the various roles of members and officers and guidelines for advising and transferring information to members whilst respecting the political impartiality of officers.
5. Since adopting the Protocol in 2009, some changes have taken place; specifically the Council has changed to a governance procedure of a Leader and Cabinet and there have also been developments in the legislation relating to local authorities in Wales, such as establishing a Democratic Services Committee and the post of Head of Democratic Services.
6. In light of this and the fact that the Council is reviewing the Constitution in its entirety, it is timely to revisit the Protocol. I have considered the standard Protocol that is included in the Modular Constitution alongside the Council's existing protocol. The contents of both are relatively similar, whilst their wording is very different.
7. I recommend to the Standards Committee that it approves the Standard Protocol in the new Modular Constitution for adoption by the Council, but with some amendments in order to include in it those matters in the Council's existing protocol that are of most importance to the Committee.

The advantage of doing so is that the Protocol will have been updated to be fit for the purposes of the existing Council and it will also be in a format that is standard to all other Welsh Councils.

8. The new standard Protocol can be seen in Appendix 1. The parts that have been highlighted grey in the document are the amendments that I have added in order to include the matters deemed important from the existing Protocol. The existing Protocol can be seen in Appendix 2 for comparison.

RECOMMENDATION

9. The Committee is requested to consider the two Protocols and then recommend the new form of the Protocol for the Council to adopt with any further amendments that the Committee wishes to include.