

- (iv) Agreed by the relevant senior officer;
- (v) Politically impartial and not influenced by an officer's own political views of preferences.
- (f) Reports that contain all the relevant issues, that do not contain irrelevant matters and that set out all the options it is reasonable for the decision-maker to consider.
- (e) Regular, up to date information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to their needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities that they have and positions that they hold.
- (f) That ward members will be kept informed of matters affecting their ward. Where practicable, ward members will be given reasonable advance warning of Council activities relating to their ward.
- (g) Awareness of and sensitivity to the political environment.
- (h) Appropriate knowledge and skills and a commitment to undertake training and development in order to carry out their role effectively.
- (k) Integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality.
- (l) Not to have personal issues raised with them by officers or to use their relationship with members to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly.
- (m) That where officers wish to bring forward new policy initiatives these will first be discussed with the elected Mayor, the Executive, or Executive member, as appropriate.
- (n) That officers will at all times comply with the Employee Code of Conduct.
- (o) That when dealing with the media, officers will act in a fair, balanced, reasonable and non-political manner.

8.2 Opposition members

As individual members, all members have the same rights and obligations in their relationship with officers and will be treated equally. This principle is particularly important in the context of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board, its sub-committees or any working parties of the Board. However, where a political group forms a majority group (either alone, or in partnership with another group), it is quite proper that the relationship between senior officers and the majority group will differ from that with opposition groups, given that the majority group will be able to determine the Council's policies and budget.

9. What Officers May Expect From Members

9.1 All officers are entitled to expect from members:

- (a) A working partnership.

- (b) An understanding of and support for respective roles, workloads and pressures.
- (c) Political leadership and direction.
- (d) Integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality.
- (e) Courtesy and civility, and not to be subject to bullying or harassment or to be put under undue pressure.
- (f) Not to be personally criticised in meetings of the Council, the Executive, or any Committee, or any other meeting at which members of the public or third parties are present, or in the media. If members are unhappy with an officer's performance they shall raise the issue in private with an appropriate Executive Head or the Chief Executive in the case of posts at Executive Head level and above in accordance with paragraph 16.
- (g) Proper consideration of the seniority of officers in determining what are reasonable requests, having regard to the power relationship between members and officers, and the potential vulnerability of officers, particularly at junior levels. All requests for officer attendance at meetings should be made through the relevant Executive Head or Service Manager.
- (h) That members will not use their position or relationship with officers to advance their personal interests or those of others or to influence decisions improperly.
- (i) That when seeking advice members will do so at the earliest reasonable opportunity and will disclose if another officer has also been approached about the matter.
- (j) When members require officers to attend meetings they should give those officers as much notice as possible to allow sufficient preparation time and for the meeting(s) to be diarised.
- (k) That members will at all times comply with the Member Code of Conduct.

10. Officer Advice to Political Groups

- 10.1 Political groups have an important part to play in the development of policy and the political management of the Council. It is in the interest of the Council to support effective operation of political groups, but their operation can pose particular dangers in terms of the impartiality of officers. It is common practice for political groups to give preliminary consideration to many matters of Council business in advance of such matters being considered by the relevant Council decision making body. Party groups may properly call upon officers to support and contribute to such deliberations.
- 10.2 Such support shall only be sought from senior officers and all requests for such support must be made via the appropriate Director. This can take many forms ranging from a briefing meeting with the elected Mayor or Executive Member prior to a formal meeting, to a presentation to a full party group meeting. Whilst in practice, such officer support is likely to be most in demand from whichever party