



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No: 9

Code of Conduct, Social Media and Monitoring Officer Protocols

To:	Audit and Governance Committee
Meeting Date:	27 January 2023
Public report:	Yes
Lead Member:	Cllr Edna Murphy (Governance Lead Member):
Report Author:	Edwina Adefehinti- Interim Chief Officer (Legal and Governance) and Monitoring Officer
Key decision:	No
Recommendations:	<p>The Audit & Governance Committee is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. note the Code of Conduct complaint informationb. support and recommend to the Board the Social Media Protocolc. support and recommend to the Board the Monitoring Officer Protocol
Voting arrangements:	A simple majority of all Members present and voting

1. Purpose

- 1.1 It is good practise for the Combined Authority to review the complaints received about Members on a regular basis and consider any action required to address the issues raised.

2. Background

2.1 The Committee should monitor complaints. This Committee has the duty to implement the obligation to ensure high standards of conduct amongst Members; and

- Ensure the Combined Authority has effective policies and processes in place to ensure high standards of conduct by its Members and Co-opted Members.
- Assist the Members and Co-opted Members to observe the Code of Conduct.
- Advise the Combined Authority on the adoption or revision of the Code of Conduct and monitor its operation.
- Advise on training and oversee the effectiveness of any training for Members and Co-opted Members on matters relating to the Code of Conduct.

3. Complaints

3.1 Four complaints have been received during this municipal year. These relate to two Members of the Combined Authority.

3.2 Due to data protection laws, the Monitoring Officer is unable to disclose the details of these complaints, however, when the decisions have been made on these complaints, a further report will be produced for the Committee. The matter may be dealt with in a closed session or at a hearing.

4. Social Media Protocol

4.1 This Committee will find attached a Social Media Protocol. Social Media is a key communication tool used by the Authority and many Councillors; it is also used by service users and key stakeholders. It has a significant role in the reputational management of the Authority and the personal reputation of Members. The Authority has developed and adopted a suite of documents giving guidance to staff and Councillors which the Committee has asked to review.

5. Monitoring Officer Protocol

5.1 The Protocol is to further explain the role and functions of the Monitoring Officer and to support their overview and implementation of effective governance arrangements for the Combined Authority. It supplements the roles and functions already detailed in the Authority's Constitution.

5.2 Under section 5 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the Authority is required to appoint an officer to act as the Monitoring Officer who is responsible for reporting to the Authority any matters which are unlawful, amount to maladministration or create injustice. The Monitoring Officer also has further statutory responsibilities, most notably in relation to standards and ethics.

5.3 Although there are many individual functions and responsibilities assigned to the Monitoring Officer both via legislation and the Constitution, they mainly centre around governance, ethics and standards which underpin the above functions. This Committee has responsibility for supporting the Monitoring Officer in discharging her role in respect of standards of conduct and behaviour and receive reports relating to maladministration causing injustice it is considered that the Committee is the appropriate body to support and recommend the Protocol to the combined authority board.

- 5.4 The protocol sets out operational arrangements and understandings which are intended to support working relations and the flow of information.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 Costs associated with the Code of Conduct investigation are being monitored and will be charged to the Combined Authority's Change Management budget.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The use of social media can have legal ramifications if used inappropriately or misused. Councillors can also face allegations that they have breached the Code of Conduct and can face sanctions as a consequence. Clear guidance is important in ensuring that members can use social media safely and effectively.

8. Public Health Implications

- 8.1 There are no public health implications to this report.

7. Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 7.1 There are no environmental implications to this report.

8. Other Significant Implications

- 8.1 None

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix A: Social Media Protocol
- 9.2 Appendix B: Monitoring Officer Protocol

10. Background Papers

- 10.1 None