

Part 4F

Monitoring Officer Protocol

The Monitoring Officer shall undertake to discharge responsibilities outlined in this section of the constitution with determination and in a manner which will enhance the reputation of the council.

In general terms their ability to discharge these duties depends on excellent working relations with colleagues and councillors but also the flow of information and access to debate particularly at early stages.

The following arrangements and understandings between the Monitoring Officer and colleagues and councillors are designed to help ensure the effective discharge of their functions:

- (a) The Monitoring Officer shall have access to Leadership Team at any time they feel it is necessary to ensure that Leadership Team are up to date with regard any emerging issues.
- (b) Advance notice of meetings whether formal or informal between the Chief Executive and members of the Executive or a committee chair will be given to the Monitoring Officer where any procedural, vices or other constitutional issues are likely to arise.
- (c) The Chief Executive will alert the Monitoring Officer to all emerging issues of concern including legality, probity, vices and constitutional issues.
- (d) The Monitoring Officer or their staff will have access to copies of all reports to members as and when required.
- (e) The Monitoring Officer is expected to develop good liaison and working relations with the Ombudsman and such external regulatory bodies as may exist, including the giving and receiving of relevant information whether confidential or otherwise.
- (f) The Monitoring Officer will have a special relationship with the Leader of the Council, chair of Audit and Ethics Committee and chair of Scrutiny Committee and will ensure the Head of Paid Service and the Chief Financial Officer have up-to-date information regarding emerging issues.
- (g) The Monitoring Officer will consider complaints against members in accordance with the complaints process.
- (h) The Head of Paid Service, the Chief Financial Officer and the Monitoring Officer will meet regularly to consider and recommend action in connection with current governance issues and other matters of concern regarding probity.
- (i) In carrying out any investigation (whether under Regulations or otherwise) the Monitoring Officer will have unqualified access to any information held by the council and any employee who can assist in the discharge of their functions.
- (j) The Monitoring Officer will have control of a budget sufficient to enable him to seek counsel's opinion on any matter concerning their functions.

- (k) The Monitoring Officer will be responsible for preparing a training programme for councillors on the ethical framework subject to the approval of Audit and Ethics Committee.
- (l) The Monitoring Officer will report to Full Council from time to time on the constitution and any necessary or desirable changes following consultation in particular with the Head of Paid Service and the Chief Financial Officer.
- (m) In consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Monitoring Officer may defer the making of a formal report under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 where another investigative body is involved.
- (n) The Monitoring Officer will make a report to Full Council from time to time as necessary on the staff, accommodation and resources required to discharge their functions.
- (o) The Monitoring Officer will appoint a deputy and keep them briefed on emerging issues.
- (p) The Monitoring Officer will make arrangements to ensure good communication between their office and clerks to parish councils.