

**STANDARDS AND ETHICS COMMITTEE:**

**18 MAY 2016**

**REPORT OF THE INTERIM MONITORING OFFICER**

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**SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE - REVIEW**

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**Reason for this Report**

1. To enable the Committee to review the guidance provided to Members on the use of social media and consider any amendments or further action required.

**Background**

2. In response to recognised new opportunities and challenges for Members presented by the growth of social media, the Committee considered this issue in 2013/14. At its meeting in July 2014, following consultation with political group leaders and whips, the Committee approved the Social Media Guidance for Councillors ('the Guidance').
3. The Guidance is intended to:
  - Introduce various forms of social media;
  - Set down rules governing the basic use of social media by Councillors;
  - Highlight sections of the Members' Code of Conduct that relate to the use of social media; and
  - Provide guidance in relation to the use of social media by councillors and to highlight some of the pitfalls to be aware of.
4. Upon approval of the Guidance, the Committee resolved to review this issue in due course.

**Issues**

5. The Social Media Guidance for Councillors approved by the Committee in July 2014 is appended as **Appendix A** to this report.
6. The Guidance was issued to Members during the roll out of new technology solutions, such as tablet computers, in 2014/15, as part of the IT Pack for Members; and has been used in Member training and development.

7. No concerns have been raised regarding the Guidance, as far as the Interim Monitoring Officer is aware; and officers in Democratic Services and Communications are of the view that the Guidance remains relevant and fit for purpose.
8. The Committee is invited to review the Guidance, make observations as appropriate, and consider whether any changes are required.

### **Legal Implications**

9. There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

### **Financial Implications**

10. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is recommended to review and comment on the current Social Media Guidance for Councillors (**Appendix A**) and to authorise the Monitoring Officer to make any amendments, as appropriate.

**David Marr**  
**Solicitor and Interim Monitoring Officer**  
12<sup>th</sup> May 2016

### **APPENDICES**

Appendix A            Social Media Guidance for Councillors