PROTOCOL FOR MEMBER AND OFFFICER RELATIONS

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 This Protocol provides guidance on how members and officers should work together effectively to deliver positive outcomes for Rutland's residents, businesses, and communities. It seeks to apply the seven principles of public life (the "Nolan Principles") into practice.
- 1.2 The Protocol provides guidance on best practice and how to meet the standards of public life, including complying with the Members' Code of Conduct and the Officers' Code of Conduct. A breach of this Protocol may be evidence of a breach of the Member Code of Conduct/Officer Code of Conduct, depending on which is relevant.

2. The Nolan Principles

2.1 The Council's ethical framework is underpinned by the Seven Principles of Public Life also called the Nolan Principles that apply to anyone who is a public office holder. Officers are required under this protocol to adhere to these principles. This protocol implements the principles into practice as follows:

Selflessness - to work for the public benefit.

Integrity – must behave fairly and properly.

Objectivity – to act without bias, judgement, or prejudice.

Openness – there should be transparency in decision making.

Accountability – to take responsibility for decisions and actions.

Honesty - public office holders should be truthful.

Leadership – public office holders should serve and guide the community.

3. Overview of Member & Officer Relations

- 3.1 All members and officers are public servants with complementary but distinct roles and responsibilities. All members and officers work to achieve the common aim of delivering services and policies that improve the lives of Rutland's residents, workforce, and businesses. All will benefit from effective working relationships between members and officers.
- 3.2 This Protocol aims to create an understanding of:
 - The distinct roles of members and officers.
 - The boundaries between members and officers; and
 - The expectations both members and officers can have of each other.

- 3.3 Understanding these areas will allow both members and officers to conduct themselves at or above this standard of behaviour and avoid dispute. The Protocol also addresses how to deal with disputes appropriately.
- 3.4 This Protocol is a practical document to guide behaviour. Members and officers should contact the Strategic Director for Law & Governance if they require specific advice.

4. Member and Officer Roles

4.1 The following is a guide to the main differences between the roles and responsibilities of members and officers.

Members	Officers
Status	
Elected by residents every 4 years. Can resign but can be disqualified only in limited circumstances. Between 2 and 9 members appointed by the Leader to form the Cabinet.	Employed by the Council under a contract of employment on a permanent or fixed term contract. Can resign or be dismissed and have employment rights.
No formal management – may be subject to political group and party discipline and accountable to the electorate and constituents	Managed by officers; led by the Chief Executive.
Subject to the Members' Code of Conduct and duty to declare interests and political group discipline.	Legal rights under employment law and the Council's policies and procedures. Subject to the employee code of conduct
Roles	
Strategic decision makers – Council sets the budget and policy framework; Cabinet carries out the functions of the local authority not the responsibility of any other part of the authority. Have oversight of operational performance by officers – but cannot manage services or instruct officers Regulatory and Governance decision makers – In committees determine regulatory matters and have oversight of finance, governance, and risk. Cannot make decisions as individual councillors	Advise and deliver services to implement the priorities agreed by members. Provide professional advice to ensure best value, financial and legal compliance. Responsible for the operational delivery of services and accountable to members for effective performance. Responsible for regulatory enforcement of individual decisions and policy implementation reporting to the Chief Executive
Political representative. Normally but not always a member of a political group.	Must remain politically neutral. Some senior and communications roles are politically restricted meaning post holders cannot be politically active.
Community leader of the whole of their ward raising issues and advancing its	Delivery of services to communities including consultation with ward members and responding to queries.

interests. Cannot instruct officers to act	
or allocate funds.	

5. Statutory officers

5.1 Some officers have a personal statutory responsibility to ensure the proper conduct of the council's administrative, staffing, legal and financial affairs. When those officers give advice acting in their statutory capacity, members must have regard to that advice. This means that Members have an obligation to follow the advice unless there is a compelling reason not to:

Head of Paid Service (the Chief Executive)	Responsible for the management of the Council's officers and their delivery of the Council's statutory duties.
Chief Finance Officer or "s.151 Officer" (Rutland County Council's Strategic Director for Resources)	Responsible for the Council's finances and ensuring the Council sets a balanced budget Must report if the Council is likely to incur unlawful expenditure
Monitoring Officer (Rutland County Council's Strategic Director for Law & Governance)	Responsible for the Council's Code of Conduct for Members. Must report if the Council is likely to act unlawfully
Director of Children Services	Professional responsibility for children's services, including operational matters.
Director of Adult Social Services	Professional responsibility for local authority statutory services functions, including delivery of all operational services across Adult Social Care.
Director of Public Health (joint post with Leicestershire County Council)	Responsible for functions relating to public health

In addition, there are statutory Proper Officer roles held by Directors and other officers. These are to be found at Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

The Council has a statutory duty to designate lead members as portfolio holders for Children's Services and Adult Social Care.

6. Personal Conduct and Behaviour

6.1 The underlying principle for member-officer relations is mutual respect for each other's roles but especially where differences of opinion and approach arise. This includes having mutual respect for the different pressures on members and officers.

This means, for example:

- Valuing each other's different expertise and knowledge, e.g., members may know their wards better than officers, but officers have professional expertise.
- Avoiding a blame culture
- Avoiding tone and language that is critical and/or disrespectful of individual officers or members.
- Zero tolerance of bullying or harassment
- Members understanding that officers, especially junior officers, cannot respond to a member's criticisms, especially in public.
- Avoiding unreasonable deadlines or excessive demands on each other
- Public perception the public expect high standards and do not expect members or officers to be rude to each other.
- Not copying others into correspondence with officers, where members are critical of officers or the Council.

7. Political Neutrality

7.1 One of the biggest differences between officers and members is their political involvement. Whilst it is often the case that members are elected as a party-political party candidate; officers must remain politically neutral in all aspects of their work.

For members, for example:

- Do not ask officers about their political views or discuss political matters with officers.
- Do not try to draw officers into criticising a member or political group.
- Respect officers' obligation to advise different political groups equally.
- Do not make allegations of bias against officers, especially in public, just because advice does not agree with your position.
- Do not make unsubstantiated allegations that officers have ulterior or malign motives. The Council and officers must make difficult decisions with finite resources and often these can mean that some residents or members are dissatisfied. It is inappropriate to make unsubstantiated allegations of corruption, political bias, or incompetence in these circumstances. Any concern should first be raised with the Strategic Director for Law & Governance on a confidential basis.

For officers, for example:

- Provide balanced advice and equal facilities to political groups as required by this Protocol.
- Provide advice and support to the Council's political administration and to deliver its policies but not to the political party that forms the administration.
- Do not bring your personal politics into your work.
- Do not be improperly influenced by members to change your mind on any issue that affects a political matter or advise based on political expediency.

 Raise issues or seek advice from the Strategic Director of Law and Governance where you have concerns.

8. Support to Political Groups

- 8.1 One of a member's roles is as a political representative. Officers can provide support to members in their political role so long as it does not breach the officer's duty of political neutrality.
- 8.2 Officers are required to advise and implement the political policies of the administration and provide additional support to the Leader and Cabinet. It is a feature of a successful council that the executive and senior management have close and effective working relationships.
- 8.3 It is an officer's duty to act in the Council's interests. This means advising where political commitments are not in the Council's overall interests or will not deliver best value. If matters cannot be resolved, they should be referred to the Council's Chief Executive who will consult with the relevant statutory officers.
- 8.4 The additional support to the administration should not extend to or be confused with support to any political group.
- 8.5 The use of Council resources (for example equipment, offices, and some officer support) for party political purposes is not permitted.
- 8.6 Political groups are an informal part of the Council's political architecture. They have no decision-making role and exist to allow those with the same political party background or similar views (for independent members) to join to ensure representation on Council committees and other bodies. In successful councils, there are good and professional working relationships and interaction between political groups of all hues and officers.
- 8.7 It is important that political groups are treated fairly and with equity but also that they are not seen as part of the formal decision-making structures.

For officers, for example

- Ensure your Director or the Chief Executive is aware of a briefing and approves it.
- Provide equal opportunity of access to briefings and advice on the same matter to all groups.
- Withdraw from meetings when political matters are discussed.
- Be open and transparent about briefings without disclosing confidential group discussions.
- Avoid briefings which could be used in a forthcoming election campaign.

For members and groups, for example

- Direct requests for briefings to the Chief Executive or Director.
- Accept that any briefing will be offered to all political groups and do not try to prevent this.

- Do not ask officers about political matters or implications.
- Accept that officers will feedback comments made in a group meeting to senior officers (but not other political groups without consent).
- Where information is provided on a confidential basis, maintaining that confidentiality.

9. Members' ward work

19.1 Members carry out vital work as community leaders in their ward. They are often the only voice for residents. Officers must respect this and provide members with support in their ward work but there are limits to the support that can be provided.

19.2 Individual members cannot by law make decisions on behalf of the council or instruct officers in their work.

For members:

- You can expect officers to respond to enquiries within the Council's standards.
- You can expect to be informed and consulted on ward matters in accordance with the Council's policy.
- Do not instruct an officer to do something and do not be offended if they refuse.
- You can expect to receive reasons why a request or guery cannot be met.
- If you do receive a response with reasons, do not criticise the officer.
- You may ask for a query to be escalated but you must accept when a final decision is made.
- You should Inform officers if a meeting includes non-councillors so they can decide whether it is appropriate for them to attend and/or disclose confidential information.
- It is acknowledged that responses to member queries submitted through,
 'Member Queries' are usually on behalf of residents and will be shared.
 Nevertheless, third parties should not be copied into correspondence between a Member and the Member Queries email address (this includes parties external to the Council and other Officers of the Council). Any other communications between members and officers are private unless the officer's consent to share has been obtained and therefore third parties should not be copied into this private correspondence.

For officers:

- Treat all member queries equally.
- Meet the Council's standards for response times and explain when you cannot.
- Provide reasons for your responses, especially if a member's request can't be met and, where you can, suggest other options.
- Escalate matters if a member is unhappy with your response.

10. Personal Relationships & Privacy

It is beneficial for the Council if members and officers can interact effectively, but professional standards must be maintained, especially if members of the public or other stakeholders are present. Members and officers often undertake their duties at different hours and members often have jobs during the working week, for example:

- Officers using formal titles "Chair" and "Councillor" in formal or public settings.
- Likewise, Members using officers' title and surname or job titles when addressing them in a public forum.
- Care should be taken by members and officers when socialising with each other. It is not unlawful, but the public perception of such relationships may be negative.
- Declaring any close or intimate relationships between members and officers (e.g., family, partner) to the Strategic Director of Law and Governance and taking required steps to avoid any conflicts of interest under either of the codes of conduct. Personal information will be held confidentially.
- Respect each other's private lives and work-life balance when making requests or in communications.

11. The Employment of Officers

11.1 Officers are employed by the Council and are accountable to the Chief Executive. Consequently, the Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the operational delivery of services and the management of officers' performance and conduct.

For example:

- Members, including the Leader and Cabinet, cannot direct the work of individual officers or manage services.
- Below senior management level, members cannot be involved in any formal action taken against individual officers except as a witness of fact.
- Officers must not ask members to support them in any employment dispute with the Council, except if they are a witness of fact.
- Members must not "lobby" on behalf of individual officers if they are subject to formal action or applying for a post.

12. Members' Rights of Access to Information & Confidentiality

12.1 Members have rights of access to council held information and this can vary with their roles and responsibilities, see the Appendix. Disclosure of information to a member does not, however, mean that the information can be made public or shared with a third party.

Summary:

- Officers must respect members' rights of access to information.
- Members must respect confidentiality, where information is disclosed on this basis and take advice from the Strategic Director of Law and Governance if they have any concerns.
- Personal information should always be treated as confidential unless advised otherwise.
- Members' rights are additional to any general rights of access to information,
 e.g., under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

13. Dispute Resolution

13.1 This Protocol's purpose is to avoid dispute through guidance, but it is accepted that this is not always possible. The Council's managers will deal with poor performance or conduct by officers in accordance with its policies and procedures. Complaints against members can be made under the Code of Conduct. In either case, the Council look to resolve matters amicably, but a formal process exists if this is not possible or appropriate.

Members - complaints about officers

- First, seek to resolve the matter informally with the officer's line manager or Director.
- Avoid public or personal criticism of officers.
- Avoid "copying in" people to complaints about officers.
- Do not make unsubstantiated allegations against officers.
- Members should be mindful of the imbalance of power in the relationship between themselves and a junior officer. Do not use undue influence to resolve a matter in your favour or to put pressure on an officer.
- If informal resolution is not possible, you can make a formal complaint to the relevant Head of Service or Director.
- Respect that the decision whether action is taken is a matter for management and must follow the Council's policies and procedures. You do not have a right to be involved in any disciplinary process save as set out in this Protocol.
- Members may provide evidence of fact in any complaint or disciplinary process.

Officers – complaints about members

- Junior officers are not expected to resolve a complaint about a member without support from their managers.
- If a matter cannot be resolved informally, officers may make a complaint under the Member's Code of Conduct.
- You are entitled to seek advice and representation from your trade union.
- Seek advice from the Strategic Director for Law & Governance.

14. Reporting Wrongdoing

If members or officers believe there is evidence of corruption, fraud, or another abuse of office, they should report it to the Strategic Director for Law & Governance or may use the Council's Whistleblowing Policy (http://sharepoint01/sites/HR/HR%20Policies/Whistleblowing%20Policy%20-%20May%202020.pdf).

A Member may consider it appropriate to report evidence of a crime directly to the Police.

APPENDIX TO PROTOCOL FOR MEMBER AND OFFICER RELATIONS

Members' Right of Access to Information:

Balancing Transparency and Confidentiality

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This Guidance summarises members' right of access to information and where members have obligations to maintain confidentiality of information disclosed to them as councillors.
- 1.2 By raising awareness amongst councillors and officers of members' rights and obligations, the Guidance aims to ensure that information can be shared with members safely and quickly within the limits on those rights of access.
- 1.3 This is a complex area of law. This Guide provides general advice and is not a complete statement of the law or advice on specific documents or information. If in doubt, members are recommended to seek further advice from the Strategic Director for Law & Governance.

2. Members' Rights – Transparency

- 2.1 Effective local democracy requires members to exercise their rights of access to information as:
 - A ward councillor representing constituents.
 - An executive or committee member making decisions on behalf of the Council.
 - An overview and scrutiny committee member reviewing the decisions and policies of the executive.
- 2.2 Members' rights of access will vary with the positions they hold in the Council.
- 2.3 Members, as county residents, also have the same rights as other citizens to access their personal data and non-personal Council held information. Members may also wish to challenge the grounds on which information is claimed to be confidential or restricted from public access.

3. Members' Obligations - Confidentiality

- 3.1 Members and officers must be aware of and respect the limits on their access:
 - Receiving confidential information as a councillor does not mean the
 information is public and can be shared with other members, constituents, or
 the public. It remains confidential unless there is consent to disclosure or it is
 published. Consent can be given to disclosure either to specific persons or
 generally.
 - Members must not refer to exempt or confidential information in public forums such as meetings.
 - Individual's data protection rights and privacy must still be respected.
 - Confidential and personal information received as a councillor cannot be used for party political purposes, e.g., to create a mailing list for political campaigning purposes.
- 3.2 A breach of confidentiality is likely to be a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct and place the Council at legal, financial, and reputational risk. It potentially leaves the councillor and Council at risk of legal action for breach of confidentiality and, for personal data, at risk of enforcement action by the Information Commissioner's Office.

4. Council, Committee & Executive Meetings

- 4.1 The following rights apply to formal meetings of the following bodies:
 - Cabinet
 - Council
 - Committees and Sub-Committees
 - Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- 4.2 Full details of the Council's rules can be found in the Access to Information Rules in the Council's Constitution.

5. General Right of Access to Papers & Meetings

- 5.1 The default legal position as set out in the Council's Constitution is that there is:
 - A right of access to all agendas, reports and minutes of cabinet, council, committee, and scrutiny meetings.
 - All these bodies are subject to statutory requirements to hold meetings in public and publish agendas five clear days in advance of the meeting.
 - Access to all meetings held in public.

6. Advance Notice of Meetings and Decisions

- 6.1 All formal meetings of Cabinet, Council, and Committees must be held with at least 5 clear days public notice. ("clear days" means working days and excludes the date of publication and the date of the meeting).
- 6.2 Cabinet meetings making key decisions (as defined in the Access to Information Rules) must publish a summary of those decisions at least 28 days before the decision is made. This is called the Forward Plan.
- 6.3 In cases of urgency, decisions which are not published on the Forward Plan may be made with notice to the Chair of Scrutiny and, if less than five clear days notice can be given, with the agreement that the decision is urgent and can be made by the Chair of Scrutiny.

7. When can Access to Meetings and Papers be Restricted from Public Access? Exempt & Confidential Information

- 7.1 The law provides for categories of information which may be excluded from public access:
- · before the meeting when publishing the agenda and papers (such papers are marked as exempt); and
- · at the meeting by agreement of the committee itself with the effect that this part of the meeting will be held in private and the press and public asked to withdraw.
- 7.2 Members who are not members of the decision-making committee are considered in law as members of the public so may also be asked to leave or seek permission to stay from the committee.

8. Categories of Exempt Information

- 8.1 "Exempt Information" is also colloquially known as "private" papers. In summary, the categories of exempt information are:
- 1. Information relating to an individual
- 2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
- 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the information) ['Particular Person' can include a company/charity]
- 4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matters
- 5. Information of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be mentioned in legal proceedings
- 6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes:(a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment

7. Any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime Full details can be found in the Access to Information Rules.

9. The Public Interest Test

- 9.1 To be classed as exempt information, the Council must also satisfy a "public interest test" i.e., the Council must show that it is in the public interest not to disclose the exempt information. In addressing this test, the Council should look at a range of factors including the content of the information and the possible consequences of disclosure or non-disclosure. It may also consider whether the exempt information may subsequently become public, e.g., the price paid for a property which would be prejudicial to the Council's position if disclosed before contracts were exchanged.
- 9.2 Reports should address how the public interest test has been met. 2 Schedule 12A of the LGA **1972**

10. Confidential Information – under the Local Government Act 1972

10.1 The 1972 Act defines categories of what it calls "confidential information" which must not be published or considered in public. Confidential information in this context has a narrow statutory meaning in this situation (and is rarely used in practice). It is defined as any information which the council is prohibited from disclosing by law or a court order or any information provided to the council by a government department on terms which forbid the disclosure of the information to the public.

11.Rights of Access for Members of Cabinet, Committees and Overview & Scrutiny

- 11.1 For the avoidance of doubt, a member appointed to a formal council body such as cabinet or a committee has the following rights:
- · To receive a copy of the agenda and papers for a meeting at least five clear days in advance of the meeting.
- · In cases of urgency, a copy may be provided at shorter notice but no shorter than to members of the public and other committee members.
- 11.2 Members should not be required to hand back agenda papers unless they choose to do so (and it is often advisable to do so) but noting that exempt papers must not be disclosed in any way and must be securely destroyed.

12. Members' Additional Rights of Access

12.1 In the above sections, a member's right of access is the same as that of the public. The following outlines the additional rights of access for members. Documents relevant to be transacted at a Cabinet, Council, Committee or Subcommittee hearing.

- 12.2 Members have the right to inspect or receive copies of any document in the possession or under the control of the Council and containing material relating to any business to be transacted at a council, committee, or sub-committee meeting.
- 12.3 It is important to note that the right is limited in the following ways.
- · It applies to access before a meeting.
- · It only applies to documents held at that time.
- 12.4 Members also have similar but not identical rights of access to documents relating to executive decisions and further advice can be provided on request. Where documents for inspection contain exempt information
- 12.5 If the report is designated as containing exempt information, the right to inspect does not apply, except where the information falls within the following categories of exempt information:
- · Paragraph 3 information about the financial or business affairs of any person (including the Council) where the information is not about terms proposed during contract negotiations.
- · Paragraph 6 proposals to issue statutory notices, directions, or other orders.

Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee Members' Rights of Access to Executive documents

- 12.6 Members of the Scrutiny Committee have additional rights of access to executive papers.
- 12.7 Scrutiny members are entitled to a copy of any document which is in the possession or under the control of the executive of that authority, and that contains material relating to one of the following:
- · Any business transacted at a private or public meeting of a decision-making body of that authority. · Any decision made by an individual Cabinet member.
- · Any decision made by an officer of the authority in accordance with executive arrangements.
- 12.8 There are limitations on this right. No scrutiny member is entitled to:
- · A copy of such document or part of a document as contains exempt or confidential information under Schedule 12A, unless that information is relevant to an action or decision that they are reviewing or scrutinising, or which is relevant to any review contained in any programme of work of the committee or one of its sub-committees.
- · A copy of a document or part of a document containing advice provided by a political adviser or assistant.
- 12.9 Where Scrutiny members have access to exempt or confidential information, they must maintain the exempt or confidential status of the information and do not have a right to disclose it to the public, press or non-scrutiny members.

- 12.10 The Executive must provide such information as soon as reasonably practicable and in any case no later than 10 clear days after receipt of a request from Scrutiny. Working Groups and Task Groups
- 12.11 Not all bodies involving members are subject to the access to information rules described above and so the rights of access described will not apply. Access will depend on consensual disclosure by the body concerned or rights under information legislation (see below).

12.12 Examples are:

- Member / officer working parties e.g., to address performance or a particular policy development.
- Member briefings e.g., by officers to a political group or on a topic of interest
- Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups
- 12.13 Such meetings need not be subject to access to information rules, but care needs to be taken that such bodies do not act like a committee in practice and that any decisions must be referred to a formal committee to be made.

13. Other Legal Rights Common Law: the "need to know".

- 13.1 Case law has developed members' rights of access under the principle called "the need to know." This right has largely been superseded by the statutory rights and duties outlined in this Guidance, e.g., exempt information and data protection rights.
- 13.2 The right is not unlimited, and the key points are set out below:
 - Members have rights of access to information so far as access is reasonably necessary for them to perform their duties.
 - The "need to know" will vary with a councillor's role. For example, an Audit Committee member will have a greater "need to know" about financial matters than other members.
 - This is not a "roving commission" to access any documents; the member needs to prove they have a right to know.
 - The right can only be used to further official duties, not private or political
 - Refusals can consider the effects on disclosure on third parties and the need to know must be in "good faith."
 - Information disclosed that is confidential in nature (or under any statutory regime) remains confidential and the member is legally required to maintain that confidentiality. Information Law Rights
- 13.3 Members have a right to request information under information legislation, such as the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 13.4 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives anyone the right to request information held by the Council. The Council is under a duty to confirm or deny that it

holds the information and, if it does, to supply the information. The Council has 20 working days to supply the information, although in certain cases, this time limit can be extended. This right of access is subject several exempt categories of information. Fees are payable for requests that take over 18 hours to provide a response.

- 13.5 Environmental information is available under the Environmental Information Regulations 2005, again with 20 working days for straightforward requests, although a fee may be charged immediately for all responses. Constituents' personal data
- 13.6 The UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 provides for members to request and have access to personal information about constituents they are representing within specified limits. There may still be restrictions on accessing personal information about people members are not representing. Advice should be sought in individual cases and see the link to ICO Guidance on this subject.

14. Members' Obligations – Respecting Privacy & Confidentiality

- 14.1 Members have wide rights of access to information held by the Council, but this does not mean that they may share all this information with other people or the public.
- 14.2 Much of the information disclosed under the "need to know" or the additional rights of access to Council and Executive documents will include access to confidential information, either about individuals, the Council or other persons/organisations.
- 14.3 Disclosure of confidential information or personal data may result in:
- · Legal or regulatory action against the Council
- · Legal or regulatory action against the member personally
- · A complaint under the Code of Conduct against the member
- 14.4 Disclosure of information may also damage the Council's financial or legal position, e.g., the disclosure of the Council's negotiating position may mean the Council incurs greater cost to the public purse that if confidentiality had been maintained.
- 14.5 Members are strongly advised to seek confidential legal advice from the Council's Strategic Director for Law & Governance before considering the disclosure of information given to them in confidential or otherwise restricted circumstances.

15. Further Advice & Sources

- 15.1 If there are any questions or queries arising from this guidance note, please do not hesitate to contact the Strategic Director for Law & Governance or the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.
- 15.2 Sources of further information and the Council's rules can be found at:

- Access to Information Rules
- Local Government Act 1972, see s.100 and 100A and Schedule 12A
- The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012
- ICO guidance on disclosure of personal information by local authorities to councillors