

Title of Report:	Consultation on the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees and the Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol
Committee Report Submitted To:	Corporate Policy and Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	22 September 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Information
To be discussed In Committee	No

Linkage to Council Plan (2026-31)	
Strategic Theme	Governance, Quality & Continuous Improvement
Outcome	Governance arrangements that ensure compliance, transparency, and effective decision-making
Lead Officer	Director of Corporate Services

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	n/a
Included in Current Year Estimates	n/a
Capital/Revenue	n/a
Code	n/a
Staffing Costs	n/a

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	YES/NO
Legal Opinion Obtained	YES/NO

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Completed
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	n/a
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	n/a
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	n/a
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	n/a
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	n/a

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this Report is to advise Members of the Consultation on the Local Government Staff Commission's intention of putting in place a Code and a Protocol which could be recommended as guidance to Councils prior to the Local Government Staff Commission's dissolution.

2.0 Consultation

- 2.1 Letter dated 22 June 2026 from the Local Government Staff Commission advising of the "**Consultation on the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees and the Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol.**" (Appendix 1)
- 2.2 The following documents are attached:
- Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees – Consultation Version (Appendix 2)
 - The Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol Consultation Version (Appendix 3)
 - A Schedule of Amendments (Appendix 4)
 - A Consultation Response Questionnaire (Appendix 5)

3.0 Extract

- 3.1 In November 2025, based on a recommendation from the Minister for Communities, the NI Executive formally agreed that the Local Government Staff Commission (the Commission) would be wound up in March 2027.
- 3.2 As a consequence of this decision the existing Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees (the Code) and Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol (the Protocol) will no longer be applicable.
- 3.3 The Commission is therefore of the view that it would be useful to put in place a Code and a Protocol which could be recommended as guidance to Councils prior to the Commission's dissolution, and which could be owned and managed by Councils with effect from 01 April 2027.
- 3.4 On this basis, the Commission now wishes to consult with Councils and other key stakeholders on the structure and provisions of a revised Code and Protocol.

4.0 Responses

- 4.1 Members should forward any responses by 9:00am on Friday 25 September 2026 to committee.meetings@causewaycoastandglens.gov.uk in order for them to be collated.

5.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee considers the Consultation document attached at Item 2.0 above.



CHAIRPERSON
Mr Bumper Graham

22 June 2026

Dear Colleague

Consultation on the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees and the Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol

In November 2025, based on a recommendation from the Minister for Communities, the NI Executive formally agreed that the Local Government Staff Commission (the Commission) would be wound up in March 2027.

As a consequence of this decision the existing Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees (the Code) and Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol (the Protocol) will no longer be applicable. The Commission are therefore of the view that it would be useful to put in place a Code and a Protocol which could be recommended as guidance to councils prior to the Commission's dissolution, and which could be owned and managed by councils with effect from 01 April 2027.

On this basis the Commission now wishes to consult with councils, the NIHE and other key stakeholders on the structure and provisions of a revised Code and Protocol. Therefore, I attach for your consideration the following:

- Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees – Consultation Version
- The Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol Consultation Version
- A Schedule of Amendments
- A Consultation Response Questionnaire

I would be grateful if you could consider this revised Protocol and provide a response to the Commission by **Thursday 22 October 2026**.

Should you require any further information, do not hesitate to contact me, or in my absence, Paula Hamilton, Senior HR Officer by email on paula.hamilton@lgsc.org.uk

Yours sincerely

Diana Stewart
Director of the Local Government Staff Commission

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

Formation Works, Lanyon
22 East Bridge Street
Belfast BT1 3NR

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

CONSULTATION VERSION

June 2026

This document is available on request in a range of formats to suit the need of different users. If you would like a copy in an alternative format, please contact your HR department.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

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CONSULTATION VERSION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Status of the Code

The wording in this paragraph will replicate the wording of the Local Government Staff Commission (Dissolution Order (NI) 2027 which will detail the responsibilities of the Department for Communities in this respect.

The Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees (the Code) is effective from 01 April 2027.

It is desirable for the protection of the public and the protection of employees that guidance be given to local government employees as to the conduct expected of them. This Code provides guidance to assist Councils and their employees in their day-to-day work and sets out the minimum standards of behaviour expected.

The aim of the Code is to set guidelines for Council employees which will help maintain and improve standards and protect employees from criticism or misunderstanding.

1.2 Scope

The provisions of this Code apply to all staff employed by Councils in Northern Ireland in the performance of their duties on a day-to-day basis including any additional offices to which they may be appointed in their capacity as a local government employee.

The terms employee/s or member/s of staff should be taken to mean any individual/s employed by a Council including those working both full time and part time on a permanent, temporary, fixed term or inward secondment basis. This Code also applies to seasonal and casual staff, agency workers and volunteers while they are engaged in carrying out duties for the Council.

2.0 FRAMEWORK FOR THE CODE

The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all employees who work for local government and this Code has been developed in line with best practice, existing legislation and the following guidance. In addition, to this guidance employees are required to demonstrate the Council's organisational values in their behaviours at work.

2.1 National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service (the National Agreement)

The basic principle is stated in Part 2 paragraph 2, Key National Provisions of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services, National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service (the National Agreement):

2. Official Conduct

- 2.1 *Employees will maintain conduct of the highest standard such that public confidence in their integrity is sustained.*
- 2.2 *Local codes of practice will be developed to cover the official conduct and the obligations of employees and employers.*

Similar provisions are incorporated in the National Conditions of Service of Local Authority Chief Executives and Chief Officers.

2.2 Nolan Principles – The Seven Principles of Public Life

This Code builds on, and is in keeping with, the seven principles of public life articulated by the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life established in 1994, please refer to Appendix 1 for the revised Nolan Principles. The Seven Principles of Public Life apply to anyone who works as a public office holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally or locally and all people appointed to work in the public sector. The descriptors have been amended to reflect Local Government employees. These Principles also apply to all those in the private sector delivering public services.

- **Selflessness** – Officers should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity** – Officers must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity** – Officers must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

- **Accountability** – Officers are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness** – Officers should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honestly** – Officers should be truthful.
- **Leadership** – Officers should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

2.3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Four further principles of conduct have been adopted from the Northern Ireland Assembly Code of Conduct that employees are expected to comply with as well as Council policies concerning equality, diversity and inclusion:

- **Equality** – Officers should promote equality of opportunity and not discriminate against any person, treating people with respect regardless of race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion, marital status and whether or not a person has dependants.
- **Promoting Good Relations** - Officers should act in a way that is conducive to promoting good relations by tackling prejudice, promoting understanding and respect and encouraging participation between people on the grounds of different religion, political opinion, race, gender, age, sexual orientation and disability.
- **Respect** – Officers should show respect and consideration for others at all times.
- **Good Working Relationships** - Officers should work responsibly with other officers and Elected Members for the benefit of the whole community. Officers' working relationships should at all times be professional, courteous and based on mutual respect.

2.4 Health and Safety

The Council takes its duty of care to its employees seriously. Employees must comply with any corporate health and safety policies and procedures that apply to their work or role.

3.0 MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

3.1 Standards of Behaviour and Impartiality

Employees are expected to provide the highest possible standard of service to the public and provide appropriate advice and support to councillors, colleagues or service users with impartiality. Employees have a duty to conduct themselves with integrity and honesty and ensure, where appropriate, that other employees do so also.

Employees will be expected, without fear of recrimination or victimisation, to bring to the attention of the appropriate level of management any deficiency in the provision of service or illegal or unethical conduct. In particular, employees should be prepared to highlight concerns with regards to fraud, safeguarding issues, health and safety, data protection and any other issue of legal compliance where actions may be unlawful or amount to maladministration, or where there could be serious impact on the safety or wellbeing of colleagues, service users, or the reputation of the Council.

Employees must report to the appropriate manager any impropriety or breach of the terms of this Code.

3.2 Disclosure of Information and Data Protection

Employees should not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal or commercial gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on knowingly to others who might use it in such a way.

Employees who have access to any commercially sensitive, confidential or personal information should only disclose it in the course of their work, as required. In addition, employees should only access and view data essential to their day-to-day tasks and not seek out individual or personal information.

The general position is that Council business should be undertaken in an open and transparent manner. This is supported through legislation (access to information rules, data protection and freedom of information).

The law requires that certain types of information must be available to Councillors, auditors, government departments, service users and the public. The Council itself may also decide to be open about other types of information. The Council should therefore make clear to employees:

- the types of information which must be made available, and to whom;
- the types of information which the Council has voluntarily made open, and to whom;
- the types of information which the Council does not wish to be disclosed without specific permission.

Any particular information received by an employee from an individual, (including a councillor) which is personal to the individual should be kept confidential, except where such disclosure is required or sanctioned by law, for example, where an individual shares information which may be a safeguarding issue, this must be shared with the Council's Safeguarding Officer and passed on to the relevant agency, or where the individual provides their permission to disclose the information.

Employees should attend any training sessions provided by the Council in relation to disclosure of information and data protection and seek advice, if unsure from their line manager.

3.3 Political Neutrality

Employees serve the Council as a whole. They must serve all councillors equally, and not just those of a particular group, for example the majority/main party, and must ensure that the individual rights of all councillors are respected.

Employees may be required to advise political groups. In the provision of such advice, employees should not compromise their political neutrality. Any advice given should be available to all political groups, if requested.

Employees must follow Council policies and must not let their own personal or political opinions interfere improperly with their work.

While the Council recognises and respects the rights of all employees to hold personal or political opinions; employees should ensure that the expression of those opinions does not constitute a conflict of interest for their role within the Council. This does not compromise an employee's rights in relation to collective trade union representation and engagement, and lawful trade union activity.

An employee of a Council cannot stand, be elected or co-opted as a councillor for the Council in which they are employed. An employee may stand and be elected as a councillor in a Council different to that which they are employed by (provided they do not hold one of the prescribed offices or employments outlined in the Local Government (Disqualification) (Prescribed Offices and Employments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

3.4 Conflict of Interest, Relationships and Personal Interests

Employees are expected to conduct themselves with integrity, impartiality and honesty and their private interests should not have the potential for allegations of impropriety or partiality to be upheld in doing so bringing the Council into disrepute.

Responsibility is placed on every employee to declare any personal or financial interests, which could reasonable be considered or perceived to conflict with the Council's interests.

Conflicts of interest could include anything that might reasonably prevent, or perceived as preventing, employees from acting with impartially or professionalism. If in doubt whether to disclose something, employees should take the more cautious approach and make the disclosure.

Employees must adhere to Council policy regarding declaration of interests and must declare any new interests to the appropriate manager as soon as they become aware of them. This includes advising their new line manager if they change their role/position in the Council. Appendix 3 on page 25 sets out a model Declaration of Interest Form, extracted from the NI Audit Office Guidance. Councils can use this model form or their own form for staff to declare their interests.

Employees must not gain financial benefit as a result of their Council employment, outside of their salary or other payment related to their employment. This would constitute a conflict of interest and potentially corruption.

In particular, attention is drawn to the following examples of situations and relationships where potential conflicts of interest can occur:

Relationships with Councillors

Employees are responsible to the Council and have a general duty to act in the interests of the local community. Some employees give advice to councillors and senior managers in the course of their work for the Council and should do so in a balanced and professional manner. Mutual respect between employees and councillors is essential to good local government.

Employees should deal with councillors in a polite, professional and efficient manner. They should not approach or attempt to influence councillors in relation to personal or contractual matters, for example, a potential regrading of their post, but should use the existing employment procedures within the Council, for example, the Grievance Procedure.

Employees should not report any issues or concerns regarding the operation of the Council, which have come to their attention in the course of carrying out their duties, to a councillor. These should be raised with their line manager through the Council procedures, if appropriate.

This does not compromise an employee's rights as a ratepayer to access and/or question the provision of Council services to them through open and transparent Council procedures, for example, in relation to a planning or refuse collection issue.

Employees should report to an appropriate manager if a councillor attempts to pressurise them to deal with a matter which is not in accordance with Council procedure or policy.

For further advice and guidance, refer to the Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol.

Contact with the Community and Service Users

Employees have a responsibility to the community they serve and should, ensure courteous, effective and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within the community. Employees should always try to be positive, constructive and inclusive.

This may require reasonable adjustments for effective communication with people with disabilities in accordance with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. In addition, the language needs of someone whose first language is not English need to be considered.

Employees also have a right not to be verbally or physically abused by the community and service users. Any incidents should be reported immediately to the employee's line manager.

The Council strives to provide consistent and accessible customer service excellence in the delivery of all services. However, it is recognised that on occasions the best possible standard of service is not provided. To ensure the Council is aware of such situations, takes remedial action and continually improves, there is a Local Government Complaints Handling Procedure which all employees are required to comply with.

Relationships with Contractors, Planning Applicants and those applying for Council Grant

All relationships with external contractors or potential contractors or applicants for planning consent or grant must be made known to the appropriate manager. Similarly, any beneficial interest or licence in respect of land which is affected by a planning application must be made known to the appropriate manager.

Employees who are employed within the Planning Department, and who are members of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), must also adhere to their Code of Professional Conduct (RTPI Code of Professional Conduct)

Orders, contracts, grants and planning decisions must be decided on merit and no special favour should be shown in the procurement process to any businesses or potential suppliers particularly those run by, for example, friends, persons to whom the employee owes (or is owed) an obligation, partners or persons where a family relationship is deemed to exist. Appendix 2, page 22 provides a definition of family relationship.

Employees who deal with, engage or supervise contractors or process or determine applications under delegated powers with whom they have previously had, or currently have, a relationship in a private or domestic capacity, should declare that relationship to the appropriate manager as soon as they are aware and a decision on their suitability to be part of the process should be made and recorded.

Employees must not accept money or any other reward from any organisation, body or individual who may benefit from work or funding provided by the Council.

Appointments and Other Employment Matters

Where an employee is involved in appointments responsibility is placed on every panel member to disclose to an appropriate manager or officer of the Council where potential conflict of interest may be present, for example partners or persons where a family relationship is deemed to exist, or if an individual has agreed to act as a referee for an applicant.

Where a potential conflict of interest exists, the issue is not about satisfying the conscience of the individual. Public perceptions and also those of other candidates must be considered and, in such cases, it may be appropriate for the individual to withdraw from the recruitment exercise.

Similarly, employees should not be involved in decisions in relation to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments for any other employee with whom they have a close personal relationship, a person to whom the employee owes (or is owed) an obligation, partner or person where a family relationship is deemed to exist. For further examples of Potential Categories of Interests see Appendix 2, page 21.

Employees should declare an interest and, if appropriate, remove themselves from discussions or meetings where they personally could potentially be a beneficiary and/or be impacted by decisions made.

Personal Interests

Employees should review regularly their personal circumstances and take steps to deal with any potential conflict of interest. As soon as they become aware of a potential conflict, employees must declare to an appropriate manager any financial or non-financial interests that they consider could bring about conflict with the Council's interests, for instance:

- membership of an organisation receiving grant aid from the Council.
- membership of an organisation or pressure group which may seek to influence the Council's policies.

- membership of an organisation which may seek to influence the performance of an employee in carrying out their duties.
- having a beneficial interest in land which is within the Council's district and is subject to any planning application.
- having a beneficial interest in a company which is seeking to or doing business with the Council.

Employees who have an interest, financial or non-financial, should not involve themselves in any decision or allocation of Council services or resources from which they, their friends, persons to whom they owe (or are owed) an obligation or family might benefit and should ensure that the matter is referred immediately to their line manager.

In a work capacity, or when using their Council job title or email address, employees must not criticise the Council either through the media, at a public meeting, or in any written communication with members of the public, including social media.

The Council recognises and respects the right of all employees to become members of organisations. However, employees must declare personal interests where there is, or could be perceived to be, a conflict of interest between their duties as an employee and their membership of the organisation.

3.5 Outside Commitments, Voluntary Work and Working Hours

All employees must be clear about their contractual obligations and must not take on outside employment which conflicts with the Council's interests and if any of the following apply to the business, employment or appointment, and engagement in it would, in the Council's view:

- not be in the Council's interests.
- put the employee in a position where duty to the Council and external interests would conflict, or are likely to conflict.
- weaken public confidence in the impartiality of the Council or in the effective conduct of the Council's work.

Employees must not have any external business, external employment or external appointment without advising their line manager.

Employees should adhere to the requirements regarding declaration of interests (seeking clarification from their line manager if required).

Engagement in any external business, employment or appointment will be deemed to act detrimentally to the Council's interests where it may give rise to or contribute to an employee's sickness absence, or deterioration in performance.

Employers and employees of Councils should be aware of their responsibilities under The Working Time Regulations (NI) 2016.

3.6 Fraud and Bribery Detection

Fraud

The Council considers fraud as the use of deception with the intention of obtaining personal gain or obtaining a gain for others, avoiding an obligation or causing a loss to another party in accordance with the Fraud Act 2006. The Council will use, and disclose as necessary, information it holds including payroll information, for the prevention and detection of fraud and for the recovery of debt. Additionally, to fulfil its duty to protect the public funds it administers, the Council is required to participate in the National Fraud Initiative.

Fraud on the part of an employee is considered an act of gross misconduct, therefore an employee who is guilty of obtaining, or attempting to obtain, personal financial benefit or financial benefit for a third party, through fraudulent means will have that matter dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedures.

Bribery

Receiving or making bribes is a criminal offence under the Bribery Act 2010 (that carries prison terms of up to 10 years and unlimited fines). Bribes may not always be monetary and may include hospitality and gifts. Employees must not:

- Offer, promise or give someone a reward to induce them to perform their functions or activities improperly.
- Accept, agree to accept or request a reward in return for performing a relevant function or activity improperly.

- Bribe a foreign public official in order to win business, keep business or gain business advantage for the organisation.

Payroll

The Council considers false claims for payroll purposes to be acts of fraud and will treat them as such. Employees must ensure that any claim for payment is accurate, for example claims for travelling expenses must be accurate and relate only to journeys necessarily undertaken for business purposes. Managers must also ensure that timesheets, travel claims, etc are accurate before authorising them.

3.7 Procurement and Contract Management

Employees involved in funding applications, the procurement process and dealing with contractors should be clear on the separation of client and contractor roles within the Council. All employees who have both a client and contractor responsibility must be aware of the need for accountability and openness.

Employees in contractor or client units must exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, suppliers, other contractors and sub-contractors. Employees who are privy to confidential information relating to the tendering process should not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.

Employees contemplating a management buyout should, as soon as they have formed a definite intent, inform the appropriate manager and withdraw from the contract awarding process.

Employees should ensure that, in awarding contracts, no special favour is shown to current or former employees or someone with whom they have a close personal relationship, partners or persons where a family relationship is deemed to exist (see Appendix 2, page 22 for a definition of family relationship) or to businesses run by them or employing them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity. If any such relationship exists, a decision on the suitability of an employee to be part of the process should be made and recorded.

3.8 Use of Financial and other Council Resources

Employees must not use Council equipment, materials and resources without authorisation or for a purpose not connected with their employment.

Finance

Employees must ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible manner. They should strive to ensure value for money for rate payers and to avoid legal challenge to the Council.

An employee who, in their role in the Council, is responsible for a budget and becomes insolvent or bankrupt, must inform their line manager promptly.

Council Vehicles

All employees must comply with Council policy which prohibits personal use of Council vehicles, including situations where (for operational reasons) an employee is required to take a Council vehicle home.

ICT

All employees must comply with Council policy governing the personal use of communications systems, use of the internet, email and telephones. The Council must make employees aware of monitoring systems in place, basic housekeeping guidelines and the requirement to encrypt equipment and files.

Records Management

Employees must ensure that all files and documents in their possession are kept in a safe and secure manner and that data protection requirements are adhered to.

Confidential information must be used only for the purpose it was obtained and must not be used or disclosed in a manner incompatible with that purpose. It must be kept securely and disposed of in a secure manner in line with data protection principles.

3.9 Hospitality and Gifts

Employees should only accept offers of hospitality or invitations to attend social or sporting functions where the Council should be seen to be represented. They must be properly authorised and recorded in accordance with the Council's policy.

If an employee is in any doubt about the propriety of accepting any hospitality, he/she should take advice from their line manager.

When hospitality has to be declined, those making the offer should be courteously advised of the procedures and standards operating within the Council. Offers of hospitality which are declined should also be recorded in the Gifts and Hospitality register.

Employees should not accept personal gifts from contractors, members of the public, outside suppliers and organisations or groups in receipt of funding from the Council, although the Council may wish to allow employees to keep items of token value such as pens, diaries etc in line with Council policy on Gifts and Hospitality.

When considering whether or not to accept authorised hospitality, employees should be particularly sensitive as to its timing in relation to decisions which the Council may be taking affecting those providing the hospitality, for instance during a tendering period of a contract for which the provider may be bidding.

Acceptance by employees of hospitality through attendance at relevant conferences and courses is acceptable where:

- it is clear that the hospitality is corporate rather than personal;
- any offers of hospitality are reported and agreed by the employee's line manager in advance, or
- where the Council is satisfied that any procurement decisions are not compromised.

Where a visit is necessary, to inspect equipment for example, the Council should consider meeting the cost of the visit to avoid jeopardising the integrity of the Council in subsequent procurement decisions.

3.10 Sponsorship - Giving and Receiving

Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor a Council activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

Where the Council wishes to sponsor an event or service neither an employee nor any friends, partners or persons where a family relationship is deemed to exist (see Appendix 2, page 22 for a definition of family relationship) must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full disclosure to an appropriate manager of any such interest.

Similarly, where the Council through sponsorship, grant aid, financial or other means, gives support in the community, employees should ensure that impartial advice is given and that there is no conflict of interest involved.

3.11 Social Media and Media Contact

The Council respects the legal rights of employees. However, incautious social media use brings with it the risk that employees may breach Council policy, which may in turn constitute misconduct resulting in disciplinary action, even if the breach is in the employee's own time.

In an employee's work with the Council, contact with the media must only take place where this has been authorised by a designated senior officer.

3.12 Raising Concerns

If an employee becomes aware of activities which he/she believes to be illegal, improper, unethical, dangerous that is in the public interest (i.e. that offers others, or otherwise inconsistent with this Code, the employee should report the matter, acting in accordance with the employee's rights under The Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (amended in October 2017), in line with the Council's Raising Concerns Policy and Health and Safety Policies.

The Order offers protection to employees who disclose serious concerns made in the public interest. In accordance with this legislation employees must not suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern.

The Council will ensure that any employee making a report does not experience detriment in the course of their employment. The Council will also take all complaints seriously; treat all parties involved fairly; exercise confidentiality wherever possible and treat victimisation as a disciplinary offence.

3.13 Breaches of the Code of Conduct

Any breach by an employee of any part of the Council's Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees or its supporting policies and guidance may be a disciplinary matter, which could lead to loss of employment. Some breaches of the Code could result in referral of the matter to the PSNI, which could lead to criminal prosecution.

CONSULTATION VERSION

NOLAN PRINCIPLES – THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

Some of the accompanying descriptors were revised following a review, published in January 2013 and November 2021 and emphasise the values those in public life should practice:

- **Selflessness** – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity** – Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity** – Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability** – Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this..
- **Openness** – Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honestly** – Holders of public office should be truthful.
- **Leadership** – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

LEGAL AND OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (paragraph 2.3, page 6)

Legislation

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003.
The Employment Equality Age Regulations (NI) 2006.
Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976.
Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998.
Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Race Relations (NI) Order 1997.
Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978 and Exceptions Order 1979.
Equal Pay Act (Northern Ireland) 1970.
Part-Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000.
Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002.
Parental Rights and Flexible Working under the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996.
Northern Ireland Act 1998.
Human Rights Act 1998.
General Data Protection Regulation 2016.
Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

2. Disclosure of Information and Data Protection (paragraph 3.2, page 7)

Data Protection Act 2018.
Freedom of Information Act 2000.
Part 8, sections 42-52 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 deals with Access to meetings and Documents.
Obligations of Discovery in connection with litigation.
Human Rights Act 1998.
General Data Protection Regulation 2016.

3. Potential Conflict of Interest Situations (paragraph 3.4, page 9)

Persons who owe you an obligation, or to whom you owe an obligation – this might include a debtor, creditor, fellow member of an organisation.

Very close personal relationships may also create a conflict, e.g. a good friend.

Family Relationship

For the purposes of the Code of Conduct, a relevant family relationship shall be deemed to exist between an officer and another person if they are:

- Married.
- Civil Partners.
- Cohabiting as if they were married.
- Cohabiting as if they were civil partners (partners).

or the other person is a biological, adopted, foster or step relative to an officer or of that officer's married partner, civil partner, or partner under one of the following categories:

- Child.
- Parent.
- Sibling.
- Son in law or Daughter in law.
- Mother in law or Father in law.
- Sister in law or Brother in law.
- Uncle or Aunt.
- Nephew or Niece.
- Grandson or Granddaughter.
- Grandparent.

For the avoidance of doubt, a personal relationship for the purposes of the Code of Conduct includes:

- a family relationship other than that specified above.
- a business/commercial/financial relationship.
- a sexual/romantic relationship.
- a friendship.

(A "friendship" refers to a personal relationship marked by mutual trust and familiarity beyond casual or professional interaction. This may include close personal friends, long-standing acquaintances, or individuals with whom there is a strong personal bond that could reasonably be perceived to affect an employee's objectivity or conduct in the workplace).

Potential Categories of Interest relating to Additional Employment

The following guidelines have been adapted from the NI Civil Service conflict of interest guidelines relating to additional employment

The following extract¹ deals with mitigating the conflict of 'being an employee, director, partner of another business or organisation, or pursuing a business opportunity':

"If an employee wishes to undertake any work (paid or unpaid) with another employer they must first advise their line manager/the Council.

No remunerative private work of the following description may be undertaken:

- a. work which would occupy your time or attention or render you unavailable for duty during normal official hours;*
- b. work identified in any way with the activities of a political party, group or organisation;*
- c. work of an educational, literary or scientific nature involving the use of information acquired by you in your official capacity or from official sources, except where it has previously been published, unless you have received the permission of your employing department to undertake such work;*
- d. work of a nature conflicting with your duty to the Council;*
- e. work which may ultimately have to be reviewed by you or any member of the Council acting in an official capacity;*
- f. work, related to your function, which an employee of the Council might otherwise justifiably undertake, but which is of such a scale as to involve unfair competition with persons wholly dependent on such work for a livelihood;*
- g. work which would involve the use of the property, tools, equipment or materials of the Council; and*
- h. work which is, or might be, inconsistent with your position as a public servant and may expose you or the Council to public criticism."*

¹ NICS Staff Handbook, Section 6.01, paragraph 6.1 and 6.2

4. Appointments and Other Employment Matters (paragraph 3.4, page 12)

Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection

The Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection issued as guidance effective from 01 April 2027.

Section 41 of Local Government Act (NI) 1972 deals with appointments to Councils.

5. Fraud and Bribery Detection (paragraph 3.6, page 14)

Section 46 of Local Government Act (NI) 1972 deals with the declaration of interest where an employee has a pecuniary interest and with recording of such interests. Not to do so will be an offence.

Section 47 of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972 forbids employees to accept payment apart from their salary/wage.

Model Declaration of Interest Form

(extracted from the NIAO [conflicts of interest good practice guide.pdf](#))

** Councils can use this model form or their own form for staff to declare their interests.*

Register of Interests:

Declaration by Member of Staff

Period: 1 January 20xx to 1 January 20xx

Surname	
Forename	
Title	
Department	
Job Title	
Date of Appointment to Current Position	
Date of Appointment to Council (if different)	

Please include dates and role

1. Company interests – any relationship with a company or commercial organisation; Directorships, paid employment, consultancy, close family connection.

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2. Self employment

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3. Land or Property Holdings – see page 6 of the NIAO Guidelines on Conflicts of Interest and Representation on Outside Bodies

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4. Charities – trusteeships, governorships or employment with any charities or voluntary organisations.

5. Public Appointments – remunerated or unremunerated.

6. Memberships – including membership of professional or external bodies, trade or other associations

7. Close Family Links – specific close family interest in any of the above

8. Other interests – any other interests held by you or your close family

I confirm that the above declaration is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. The interests I have declared include both direct and indirect interests (ie. those of a partner, spouse or close relative) and any specific financial interests are shown.

Signature:

Date:

Print:

Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol

Consultation Version June 2026

This document is available on request in a range of formats to suit the need of different users. If you would like a copy in an alternative format, please contact your HR department.

Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1** This Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol (the Protocol) is intended to guide Councillors and officers of the Council in their working relations with each other.
- 1.2** The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the 2014 Act) includes an ethical framework for local government, a key element of which is the mandatory requirement for Councillors to observe the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors (the Councillor Code), which establishes mechanisms for the investigation and adjudication of complaints and for appeals. The Councillor Code came into force on 28 May 2014 with Part 9 which deals with planning coming into effect from 1 April 2015.
- 1.3** *The wording in this paragraph will replicate the wording of the Local Government Staff Commission (Dissolution Order (NI) 2027 which will detail the responsibilities of the Department for Communities (DfC) in this respect. The Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees (the Code) is effective from 01 April 2027.*
- 1.4** Councils have established policies and procedures to resolve issues that employees¹ may encounter in the workplace. This Protocol does not override any existing employee policies or legal obligations but seeks to clarify the expected working relationship between Councillors and Employees.
- 1.5** All issues raised under the remit of this Protocol must be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

2.0 Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this Protocol is to:

- a) Promote trust, openness, fairness and honesty by setting out the working relationship between Councillors and Employees.
- b) Define roles so as to:
 - Clarify responsibilities.
 - Avoid conflict.
 - Ensure prompt resolution of any difficulties that may arise.
 - Prevent duplication or omission.

¹ For the purpose of this Protocol the term 'employees' or members of staff should be taken to mean any individual/s employed by a Council including those working both full time and part time on a permanent, temporary, fixed term or inward secondment basis. The Protocol also applies to seasonal and casual staff, agency workers and volunteers while they are engaged in carrying out duties for the Council.

- c) Secure compliance with the law, codes of conduct and the Council's own practices; and
- d) Set out procedures for dealing with concerns raised by Councillors or Employees.

2.2 Councillors and Employees must at all times observe this Protocol.

2.3 The Protocol seeks to maintain and enhance the integrity (real and perceived) of local government which demands the highest standards of personal conduct. Councillors and Employees must always respect the roles and duties of each other. They must show respect in all their dealings by observing reasonable standards of courtesy and by not seeking to take unfair advantage by virtue of their position.

2.4 Breaches of this Protocol by a Councillor may result in a complaint to the Local Government Commissioner for Standards. Breaches of this Protocol by an Employee may lead to disciplinary action.

2.5 This Protocol should also assist in furthering and developing a harmonious working environment with positive, constructive and professional relationships between Employees and Councillors.

3.0 Principles

3.1 This Protocol seeks to maintain and enhance the integrity (real and perceived) of local government which always demands the highest standards of personal conduct at all times.

This Protocol upholds the seven Nolan Principles and the additional principles of public life.

- **Selflessness** – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity** – Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity** – Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability** – Holders of public office are accountable to the public

for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

- **Openness** – Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honestly** – Holders of public office should be truthful.
- **Leadership** – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Four further principles of conduct have been adopted from the Northern Ireland Assembly Code of Conduct that employees are expected to comply as well as Council policies concerning equality, diversity and inclusion:

- **Equality** – Officers should promote equality of opportunity and not discriminate against any person, treating people with respect regardless of race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion, marital status and whether or not a person has dependants.
- **Promoting Good Relations** - Officers should act in a way that is conducive to promoting good relations by tackling prejudice, promoting understanding and respect and encouraging participation between people on the grounds of different religion, political opinion, race, gender, age, sexual orientation and disability.
- **Respect** – Officers should show respect and consideration for others at all time.
- **Good Working Relationships** - Officers should work responsibly with other officers and Elected Members for the benefit of the whole community. Officers' working relationships should at all times be professional, courteous and based on mutual respect.

3.2 The Council has adopted mandatory codes of conduct for both Councillors and Employees which are based on the principles governing Councillors' and Employees' conduct enshrined in law. These principles underpin this Protocol.

- 3.3** Councillors are accountable to the electorate and serve only as long as their term of office lasts. Employees are accountable to the Council as a whole. Their job is to give advice to Councillors (individually and collectively) and to carry out the Council's work under the direction of the Chief Executive.

4.0 Conduct of Local Government Employees towards Councillors

- 4.1** Employees must treat all political groups and individual Councillors equally, fairly and remain politically neutral at all times. Employees will provide professional, impartial and effective support, to enable Councillors to fulfil their role, in and on behalf of the Council. Employees will not seek to influence or lobby a Councillor with regards to personal issues.
- 4.2** It is important that there should be good working relationships between senior Council Employees and Chairs of Committees and Mayors/Chairs. However, such relationships should not be allowed to become so close as to cast doubt either on an officer's ability to deal impartially with other Councillors, or the Chair/Mayor's ability to deal impartially with other employees.
- 4.3** Employees must at all times keep Councillors fully informed about significant issues which affect their wards or bodies on which they represent the Council. For example, if the Council conducts a consultation exercise, relevant Councillors, including ward Councillors should be notified at the beginning of the exercise.
- 4.4** An employee shall not discuss with a Councillor any work-related matters concerning him/herself or another individual Employee. These such matters should be dealt in accordance with Council policy.

5.0 Conduct of Councillors towards Local Government Employees

- 5.1** Councillors' engagement with Employees must be equitable, reasonable, courteous and respectful and ensure that the impartiality of Employees is not compromised. Councillors must abide by their Code of Conduct and their Council's standing orders.
- 5.2** It should be remembered that Employees are accountable to their Chief Executive, as Head of the Paid Service and that whilst Employees should always seek to assist a Councillor, they must not; in so doing go beyond the bounds of whatever authority they have been given by their Chief Executive.
- 5.3** Whilst Councillors are entitled to question Employees at meetings or in any public or private forum, they should not raise matters relating to the conduct or capability of an Employee or of Employees collectively, in a manner that is incompatible with this Protocol at meetings held in public or in any public forum. An Employee has no means of responding to criticisms in public.
- 5.4** Councillor's must not do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise employees' impartiality.

5.5 In seeking to deal with constituents' queries or concerns, Councillors should not seek to jump the queue but should respect the Council's procedures.

5.6 Councillors may request Designated Officers to provide them with such information, explanation and advice as they may reasonably need to assist them to discharge their roles as Councillors. This may range from general information about some aspects of the Council's services to specific information on behalf of a constituent. Where information is requested on behalf of a third party, it will only be provided if:

- It is in the public domain, and
- It is not barred by the Data Protection Act from being given.

6.0 Dealing with Disputes/Complaints Between Councillors and Local Government Employees

6.1 Councillors and Employees normally work well together. However, it is still necessary to have a clear procedure to deal with matters when disputes arise.

6.2 All complaints or disputes must be dealt with confidentially, courteously and respectfully.

6.3 The key principle for dealing with complaints is that both Councillors and Employees are committed to informal, non-adversarial solutions. Where a dispute or complaint arises, the first step should be for both parties to seek to resolve any differences informally, where necessary, with the assistance of a third party.

6.4 Alternative resolution of complaints or concerns may be recommended or achieved as agreed between the Councillor and Employee, including but not limited to a personal explanation, training, mediation and or an apology. No party can be forced to engage in such alternative resolution of complaints.

6.5 Further consideration may not be given in relation to a complaint if one or more of the following apply:

- Persistent or multiple complaints have been received which appear to be, for example, vexatious, malicious, politically motivated, relatively minor, insufficiently serious or tit-for-tat.
- Similar or the same complaints have already been raised and addressed and there is nothing more to be gained by further action being taken.
- The complaint concerns or is really about dissatisfaction with a Council decision or advice.
- There is not enough information to justify further investigation.
- The complaint is anonymous.
- The matter complained of took place more than 3 months before the complaint is received.

Complaint raised by a Councillor Towards a Local Government Employee

- 6.6** In the event that a Councillor wishes to raise either an informal or formal complaint regarding the conduct or behaviour of an Employee, the following process should be followed:

Informal Approach

- 6.7** A Councillor should seek to raise the matter in the first instance with the Director of the relevant service who should seek to resolve the matter with the Employee concerned. The Councillor must not engage directly with the Employee, nor make any attempt to reprimand or discipline the Employee.

Formal Approach

- 6.8** Where an informal resolution is not possible, or if the Councillor is unhappy with the outcome of the informal approach or considers the initial complaint to be of a serious nature, they should raise the matter formally with the relevant individual referred to below, who will determine how best to deal with the matter:

- A complaint by a Councillor against an Employee should be made to the Director of the service in question.
- A complaint by a Councillor against a Director should be made to the Chief Executive.
- A complaint by a Councillor against the Chief Executive should be made to the Mayor/Chair of the Council, copied to the senior officer responsible for HR (eg Head of Human Resources).
- A complaint by a Councillor against an Employee (at any level) and the Chief Executive should be made to the Mayor/Chair of the Council, copied to the senior officer responsible for HR (eg Head of Human Resources).
- A complaint by a Councillor against an Employee (at any level) and another Councillor should be made to the Chief Executive.

- 6.9** The Councillor may also wish to make their Party Group Leader, if relevant, aware of the complaint.

- 6.10** The recipient of the complaint may consult with others, as considered appropriate, for example human resources section where procedural advice is necessary.

- 6.11** The Councillor who has lodged a complaint has a right to know if action has been taken to correct a complaint or dispute, but they must not:

- Insist, or suggest to insist, that an Employee is disciplined; or
- Influence the level of any disciplinary action which might be taken against an Employee.

6.12 The matter will be investigated, and the Councillor will be informed of progress and outcome but has no entitlement to detailed information about any disciplinary hearing or its conduct.

6.13 A Councillor's evidence will be considered as part of a formal process but the Councillor must:

- Respect the confidentiality of the investigation and disciplinary process.
- Not seek to improperly influence the action taken against the Employee.
- Accept the final decision.

6.14 The outcome of the formal investigation may result in:-

- no further action being required,
- a verbal or written apology to the Councillor with an acknowledgement by the Employee that their conduct failed to meet the agreed standard and an undertaking that there will be no recurrence; or
- referral for consideration under the Council's disciplinary procedures.

6.15 The Employee will be informed in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedures.

6.16 If the complaint is in relation to the Chief Executive the procedures specified in the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Executives of Local Authorities or the appropriate mechanism at that time will be followed.

Complaints by a Local Government Employee towards a Councillor

6.17 This protocol does not preclude an Employee, at anytime, if they think it necessary, to write to the Commissioner for Standards setting out how, in their opinion, a Councillor has breached the Code.

6.18 In the event that an Employee wishes to raise either an informal or formal complaint regarding the conduct or behaviour of a Councillor, the appropriate support must be provided by their respective line manager, and the following procedure should be followed:

Informal Approach

6.19 An Employee should seek to raise the matter in the first instance, confidentially with their relevant Director, providing details of the incident that has occurred. The Employee must not engage directly with the Councillor. If necessary, the Director may involve the Group Party Leader, if relevant.

6.20 The Director will undertake to resolve the matter through discussions with the Councillor concerned and report on the outcome to the Employee and the Chief Executive.

Formal Approach

- 6.21** If the Employee is unhappy with the outcome of the informal approach or considers their complaint to be of a serious nature, they may wish to consult with their recognised Trade Union representative, if applicable prior to raising the matter formally (verbally or in writing) with the relevant Director.
- 6.22** The relevant Director, with support from a senior HR Employee, if applicable, will ensure the matter is investigated according to the appropriate Council investigatory process.
- 6.23** The Councillor and Party Group Leader, if relevant, will be advised of the complaint and should agree to co-operate with the investigation to establish the facts.
- 6.24** The outcome of the investigation may result in: -
- no further action being required, or
 - a verbal or written apology to the Employee with an acknowledgement by the Councillor that their conduct failed to meet the agreed standards and an undertaking that there will be no recurrence.
- 6.25** If the Director considers that the circumstances of the complaint is sufficiently serious or a pattern of behaviour emerges, they may recommend to the Chief Executive that the matter is raised at a formal meeting with the Party Group Leader, if relevant.
- 6.26** The Director will write to the Employee and, where appropriate, their recognised Trade Union representative advising of the outcome. If the Employee is unhappy with the outcome, they may request that their complaint be reviewed by the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will review the complaint and advise the Employee and their Trade Union representative of their decision.
- 6.27** The Councillor and the Group Party Leader, if relevant, will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation and consideration of further action.

7.0 Breaches of the Protocol

- 7.1** Breaches of this Protocol by a Councillor may constitute a breach of the Councillor Code.
- 7.2** Breaches of this Protocol by an Employee may be referred for disciplinary action.

This protocol is the interface between current Councillor and Employee Codes of Conduct, which require the highest standards of personal conduct, including activities on social media, to be maintained at all times.

The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland



Review of the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees and Local Government Employees and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol

Schedule of Amendments

Against old version to new version

Click the below link

[Microsoft Word - 1. Revised Code of Conduct Jan 21](#)

June 2026

Code of Conduct

SECTION 1 – Introduction

Status of the Code

This paragraph has been amended to include an adoption date. Refer to paragraph 1.1.

Scope

This is a new paragraph added. Refer to paragraph 1.2.

SECTION 2 – Framework for the Code

Framework for the Code

This paragraph has been amended. Refer to paragraph 2.0.

National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service (the National Agreement)

This paragraph is unchanged. Refer to paragraph 2.1.

Principles of Conduct

This paragraph has been amended to reflect the November 2021 review of the accompanying descriptors, the retitling of the Principles as *Nolan Principles: The Seven Principles of Public Life*, and the inclusion of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Refer to paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3.

Health and Safety

This is a new paragraph added. Refer to paragraph 2.4.

SECTION 3 – Consultation and Implementation

This section has been deleted.

SECTION 4 – Model Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees

(Renumbered as Section 3 in the revised Code)

Standards of Behaviour and Impartiality

This paragraph has been amended and retitled Standards of Behaviour and Impartiality. Refer to paragraph 3.1.

Disclosure of Information and Data Protection

This paragraph has been amended and retitled Disclosure of Information and Data Protection. Refer to paragraph 3.2.

Political Neutrality

This paragraph is unchanged. Refer to paragraph 3.3.

Conflict of Interest, Relationships and Personal Interests

This paragraph has been amended and retitled Conflict of Interest, Relationships and Personal Interests. Refer to paragraph 3.4.

Relationship with Councillors

This paragraph is unchanged and incorporated into paragraph 3.4.

Contact with the Community and Service Users

This paragraph is unchanged and incorporated into paragraph 3.4.

Relationship with Contractors, Planning Applicants and those applying for Council Grants

This paragraph is unchanged and incorporated into paragraph 3.4.

Fraud and Bribery Detection (formerly Bribery and Corruption / Fraud and Corruption)

This paragraph has been amended and consolidated from the previous Bribery and Corruption and Fraud and Corruption provisions. Refer to paragraph 3.6.

Appointments and Other Employment Matters

This paragraph is unchanged and incorporated into paragraph 3.4.

Outside Commitments, Voluntary Work and Working Hours

This paragraph has been amended and retitled Outside Commitments, Voluntary Work and Working Hours. Refer to paragraph 3.5.

Personal Interest

This paragraph is unchanged and incorporated into paragraph 3.4.

Equality Issues

This paragraph has been amended and incorporated into paragraph 2.3.

Separation of Roles

This paragraph is unchanged but retitled Procurement and Contract Management. Refer to paragraph 3.7.

Use of Financial and Other Council Resources

This paragraph has been amended. Refer to paragraph 3.8.

Hospitality and Gifts

This paragraph is unchanged. Refer to paragraph 3.9.

Sponsorship – Giving and Receiving

This paragraph is unchanged. Refer to paragraph 3.10.

Social Media and Media Contact

This is a new paragraph added. Refer to paragraph 3.11.

Raising Concerns

This paragraph has been amended. Refer to paragraph 3.12.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

This paragraph is unchanged. Refer to paragraph 3.13.

Appendices**Appendix 1**

Nolan Principles – The Seven Principles of Public Life.

Appendix 2

Legal and Other Provisions Relating to the Code of Conduct.

Appendix 3

Model Declaration of Interest Form.

Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol

SECTION 1 – Introduction

This section has been amended. Refer to paragraphs 1.1 to 1.5.

SECTION 2 – Purpose

This section has been amended. Refer to paragraphs 2.1 to 2.5.

SECTION 3 – Conduct of Local Government Employees towards Councillors

This section has been amended and retitled Principles, including the Nolan Principles.

Refer to paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3.

SECTION 4 – Conduct of Local Government Employees towards Councillors *(Formerly Section 3 in the previous Protocol)*

This section has been amended and renumbered. Refer to paragraphs 4.1 to 4.4.

SECTION 5 – Conduct of Councillors towards Employees

This section has been amended and retitled Conduct of Councillors against Local Government Employees. Refer to paragraphs 5.1 to 5.6.

SECTION 6 – Dealing with Disputes/Complaints Between Councillors and Local Government Employees

This is a new section added to the Protocol. Refer to paragraphs 6.0 to 6.27.

SECTION 7 – Breaches of the Protocol

This is a new section added to the Protocol. Refer to paragraphs 7.0 to 7.2.

Consultation Questionnaire on the Review of the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees and the Local Government Employee and Councillor Working Relationship Protocol

The Commission would welcome your comments on the revised Code of Conduct and Protocol. Please provide any comments you have on the sections below and return to Diana Stewart at diana.stewart@lgsc.org.uk by Thursday 22 October 2026.

Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees

Section 1: Introduction Do you have any comments on this section?
Section 2: Framework of the Code Do you have any comments on this section?
Section 3: Model Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees Do you have any comments on this section?
Appendices Do you have any comments on the appendices?
Do you have any further comments on the Code of Conduct?

Protocol for Working Relationships between Local Government Employees and Councillors

Section 1: Introduction Do you have any comments on this section?
Section 2: Purpose Do you have any comments on this section?
Section 3: Principles Do you have any comments on this section?
Section 4: Conduct of Local Government Employees towards Councillors Do you have any comments on this section?
Section 5: Conduct of Councillors towards Local Government Employees Do you have any comments on this section?
Section 6: Dealing with Disputes and Complaints between Councillors and Local Government Employees Do you have any comments on this section?
Section 7: Breaches of the Protocol Do you have any comments on this section?
Do you have any further comments on the Protocol?

Organisation on whose behalf this response is submitted: _____