

# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Council

### Date: 23 July 2015

## ITEM 7

Title: Protocol on use of  
Social Media by Members

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor

Cabinet Member(s): N Redfearn

Report from Service Area: Law and Governance

Responsible Officer: Vivienne Geary, Head of Law and Governance (Tel: (0191)6435339)

Wards affected: All

### PART 1

#### 1.1 Purpose:

The draft Protocol on use of Social Media by Members (the Protocol) was referred by the Council for consideration by the Members Support Group. The Members Support Group considered the Protocol on 1 July 2015 and supported its introduction. Council is requested to adopt the draft Protocol.

#### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Council approves the draft Protocol on the use of Social Media by Members set out in Appendix A to this report and refers the Protocol to the Elected Mayor for her consent in accordance with Article 15 of the Constitution.

#### 1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 23 March 2015.

#### 1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report has no direct relevance to the Our North Tyneside Plan priorities.

#### 1.5 Information:

1.5.1 At the Annual Council Meeting, the Council considered a report reviewing the operation of the Constitution and making recommendations to Council on ways in which it could be amended to ensure that it achieves its purpose as set out in Article 1.

1.5.2 One of the specific objectives of the annual review was to ensure the Constitution reflects all current statutory requirements and, where appropriate, current practice.

- 1.5.3 The report submitted to the Annual Council meeting proposed that a Protocol on the use of Social Media by Members be introduced into the Constitution. The Protocol along with the other proposals in relation to the Constitution were considered by the Constitution Task Group at its meeting on 22 April 2015.
- 1.5.4 At the Annual Council Meeting the draft Protocol was referred to the Members Support Group for further consideration.
- 1.5.5 The Members Support Group considered the draft Protocol at its meeting on 1 July 2015. Members discussed the document and agreed to recommend approval of the Protocol and to refer it back to Council.
- 1.5.6 Attached at Appendix A is the draft Protocol which has been approved by the Constitution Task Group and the Members Support Group. It is submitted for Council's approval.

## **1.6 Decision options:**

The following decision options are available for consideration by Council:

- Option 1 - Accept the recommendation and approve the Protocol;
- Option 2 - Make amendments to the Protocol; or
- Option 3 - Reject the Protocol.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

## **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

- 1.7.1 Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:
- 1.7.2 The proposals presented to Council have been scrutinised by the Constitution Task Group, which is the Authority's consultative body for any changes to the Constitution and its associated documents and have also been recommended for approval by the Members Support Group and are the recommendations of the Monitoring Officer, who has a duty under Article 16 of the Constitution to monitor and review the Constitution.

## **1.8 Appendices:**

Appendix A – Proposed Protocol on the use of Social Media by Members

## **1.9 Contact officers:**

Stephen Ballantyne, Lawyer Specialist – Governance and Employment (Tel: 643 5358)  
Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner, (Tel 643 7038)

## **1.10 Background information:**

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

North Tyneside Council's Constitution  
Papers submitted to Constitution Task Group on 22 April 2015

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

There are no financial implications arising from the proposed Protocol that can not be absorbed within the existing Democratic Support budget. Any publication costs relating to the Protocol will also be met from the existing Democratic Support budget.

### **2.2 Legal**

The annual review of the Constitution, including a review of the 'local choice' elements of the Policy Framework, is required by the Constitution. The Head of Law and Governance has been fully consulted in the drafting of the Protocol and all changes comply with current legislation.

Any specific legal implications arising from the proposed Protocol have been taken into account by the Constitution Task Group.

### **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

All Members of the Council and the Senior Management Team were invited to put forward proposed changes to the Constitution documents.

The Constitution Task Group and the Member Support Group have met to consider the documentation in detail.

### **2.4 Human rights**

The contents of the report and its appendices comply with the Human Rights Act 1998.

### **2.5 Equalities and diversity**

Any specific equalities and diversity implications arising from the Protocol have been taken into account by the Constitution Task Group in developing these proposals and the Equalities Impact Assessment carried out in 2010 has been updated to reflect this.

### **2.6 Risk management**

Any specific risk management implications arising from the Protocol have been taken into account by the Constitution Task Group in developing these proposals.

### **2.7 Crime and disorder**

Any specific crime and disorder implications arising from the Protocol have been taken into account by the Constitution Task Group in developing these proposals.

### **2.8 Environment and sustainability**

Any specific environment and sustainability implications arising from the Protocol have been taken into account by the Constitution Task Group in developing these proposals.

### **PART 3 - SIGN OFF**

- Deputy Chief Executive  X
- Head of Service  X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)  X
- Chief Finance Officer  X
- Monitoring Officer  X
- Head of Corporate Strategy  X