



# EARLS COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

## MEMBER / OFFICER PROTOCOL (2026)

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### 1. Purpose

This protocol sets out how councillors (Members) and officers (staff) will work together to ensure effective governance, mutual respect and clear roles within Earls Colne Parish Council.

### 2. Roles and Responsibilities

Members are responsible for:

- Setting the strategic direction and policies of the Council
- Making decisions collectively at Council meetings
- Representing the interests of the community
- Complying with the adopted Code of Conduct

Officers are responsible for:

- Providing professional and impartial advice
- Implementing Council decisions
- Managing day-to-day operations
- Ensuring compliance with legal and financial requirements

### 3. Working Relationships

- Relationships must be based on mutual trust and respect
- Members must not seek to direct staff outside formal decisions or Standing Orders
- Officers must remain politically neutral
- All communications should be courteous and professional

### 4. Communication

- Routine matters should be directed through the Clerk



- Members must not bypass the Clerk to instruct other staff
- Requests for information should be reasonable and proportionate
- Officers will provide information in line with Council policies and workload priorities

## **5. Decision Making and Governance**

- Decisions are made collectively in accordance with Standing Orders
- The Clerk implements decisions in accordance with Council resolutions and Financial Regulations

## **6. Confidentiality**

- Members and officers must respect confidential information
- Information must not be disclosed without proper authority
- Confidential items must be handled in accordance with Council procedures

## **7. Conduct and Standards**

- Members must comply with the Code of Conduct at all times
- Officers must comply with employment policies including the Grievance and Disciplinary Policy
- Bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated
- Concerns about behaviour should be addressed promptly

## **8. Disputes and Complaints**

Issues between Members and officers should be raised informally in the first instance. If unresolved, matters may be referred to the Chairman or Personnel Committee. Where appropriate, the Council's Grievance and Disciplinary Policy or Complaints Procedure will apply.

## **9. Related Documents**

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct
- Grievance and Disciplinary Policy



- Complaints Procedure

## 10. Review

This protocol will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman)