

## **MS and MP Protocols**

### **1. Correspondence**

There is a strongly held view that local authority matters raised by constituents should be dealt with by local Councillors, but if a constituent insists on pursuing a matter with an MP/MS, then the following protocols will apply:

- (a) Queries or requests for information about the constituency matter, or any other local authority matter, should normally be made in writing to the Chief Executive, relevant Director or Head of Service.

A copy of the letter from the MP/MS will be made available to the relevant Cabinet Member or Regulatory Committee Chair, and notification of receipt of the letter shall be given to the local member where the matter affects their Ward (e.g. a highway problem of general interest) but not if it concerns a personal or confidential matter involving the constituent, e.g. a Social Services or Housing Benefit matter.

A copy of the letter and draft response will also be forwarded to the Leader. The final response, as agreed, will be sent by the Chief Executive, Director or Head of Service. This will also be copied to Local Member(s) as appropriate, i.e. where the matter affects their Ward (e.g. a highway problem of general interest) but not if it concerns a personal or confidential matter involving the constituent, e.g. a Social Services or Housing Benefit matter.

Where the matter involves more than one ward, correspondence should be copied to all members within those wards.

This protocol will apply to all MP/MS regardless of what constituency they represent.

### **2. Meetings**

- (a) Requests for meetings should normally be made in writing to the Chief Executive, relevant Director or Head of Service

- (b) If an MP/MS contacts the Chief Executive, Director or Head of Service for a meeting on specific local authority matters, or where an Officer proposes to MP's/MS's that a meeting be held, the Leader will be informed to determine whether such a meeting is to be held and, more particularly, whether he and/or the relevant Cabinet Member or Regulatory Committee Chair should be in attendance with the Officer.
- (c) If an MP/MS contacts a Cabinet Member or Regulatory Committee Chair direct, or if one of those members proposes a meeting, then the Leader will similarly be informed.

### **3. Invitations/Visits**

- (a) Any invitations to an MP/MS to an event or visit organised by the Council, will be agreed first by the Leader, with attendance arrangements for relevant Cabinet Member or Regulatory Committee Chair to be determined as in 2 above.
- (b) If an MP/MS requests a public visit to Council land or premises, this will be discussed with the Leader for a decision to be made on the appropriate arrangements.

NOTE: The reference to MP/MS also includes their staff; or any prospective candidate (MP/MS).