

## ETHICS AND ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Monday, 8 January 2024**

**6.00 pm**

**Committee Rooms 1 and 2**

Membership: Councillors Adrianna McNulty (Chair), Liz Bushell (Vice-Chair), Thomas Dyer, Gary Hewson, Ric Metcalfe, Hilton Spratt, Rachel Storer, Dylan Stothard and Aiden Wells

Substitute member(s): Councillors Natasha Chapman, Martin Christopher, Donald Nannestad, Clare Smalley and Joshua Wells

Independent Person(s): Fred Mann

Officers attending: Democratic Services

---

### A G E N D A

---

<b>SECTION A</b>	<b>Page(s)</b>
1. Confirmation of Minutes - 10 November 2021	<b>3 - 4</b>
2. Declarations of Interest	
Please note that, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, when declaring interests members must disclose the existence and nature of the interest, and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) or personal and/or pecuniary.	
3. New Member Induction Programme 2024	<b>5 - 142</b>
4. Work Programme - Feedback on Suggested Topics	<b>Verbal Report</b>

This page is intentionally blank.

**Present:** Councillor Adrianna McNulty (*in the Chair*)

**Councillors:** Liz Bushell, Thomas Dyer, Gary Hewson,  
Jane Loffhagen, Laura McWilliams, Christopher Reid and  
Lorraine Woolley

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Ric Metcalfe and Roger Vine

**1. Confirmation of Minutes - 11 January 2021**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Social Media Policy**

Consideration was given to a report by Steve Welsby (Communications Manager), which invited comments on the proposed amended Social Media Policy, which incorporated provisions such as the council accounts available for use, employee wellbeing, the best use of social media, personal accounts and councillor use of social media. The report also sought a recommendation from the Committee to the Executive for the policy's approval.

Further to the Committee's consideration of the draft Social Media Policy in January 2020, the comments of the Committee had been incorporated into the latest version. It was explained that the revised draft policy was being considered at this stage, as the Covid-19 Pandemic had meant that it had not been possible to make progress, owing to other pressures.

The main changes involved the separation of the policy into three distinct areas: covering general advice; advice to councillors; and advice to employees. This would make it clear where the advice was aimed at.

The Communications Team had worked alongside partners, such as the NHS and Lincolnshire County Council, during the Covid-19 Pandemic to promote key messages. The Council used Facebook and Twitter and was exploring the possibility of using TikTok.

During consideration of the draft Policy, the following points were noted:

- It was suggested that all councillors received a copy of the Social Media Policy prior to it being submitted to the Executive for approval.
- The Policy should include advice to 'dual-hatters' – those councillors who served on both the City of Lincoln Council and Lincolnshire County Council, as these councillors tended to operate joint social media accounts for both roles they undertook.
- It was confirmed that this policy related to any personal social media accounts and not the social media accounts of any organisation a councillor may sit on, for example Development Plus.

- Under section 10 – *To block or not to block*, it was requested that the suggested courses of action for Twitter and Facebook were the same.
- Under section 11 – *Photography and video*, it was requested that the wording on seeking permissions for photos was clarified, particularly the difference between taking photos of individuals compared to photos taken in a public place.
- Under section 12 – *How the council will ensure the best use of its social media*, the last bullet point should be amended to reflect that no derogatory comments should be made about anyone or the council as a whole.
- It was requested that additional detail be added to the sentence *The council will not continue with poor performing accounts* so that the intended meaning behind this statement was clear.
- It was acknowledged that councillors were responsible for any content on their social media accounts, including comments of others. Further to this, it was requested that the section on the Council's social media accounts was updated to reflect that it too was responsible for any content on its social media account, including comments of others. It was noted that the Communications Team continually monitored the Council's social media accounts, including outside of office hours. The Council also utilised filters on its accounts to block any inappropriate content posted by others.
- It was requested that the policy included which department councillors could contact for support should they receive threats via social media.
- It was confirmed that comments and direct messages sent to the Council's social media accounts were responded typically within a timeframe of 24 hours. However, this could sometimes take longer if the Communications Team had to obtain information from departments. It was also confirmed that any incorrect statements posted by others were corrected by the Team, provided it was appropriate to do so.
- It was noted that the policy stated the Council's logo should not be used as part of a profile photo. However, it was highlighted that certain social media platforms, such as LinkedIn automatically added logos. It was confirmed this wording would be revisited.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That the revised draft Social Media Policy be supported, provided that the above suggested comments and amendments be incorporated.
- (2) That subject to (1) all councillors be sent a copy of the updated Social Media Policy, prior to it being submitted to the Executive for approval.

#### 4. **Work Programme**

Consideration was given to the work programme for the coming months.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) That the meeting scheduled to be held on 10 January 2022 be cancelled.
- (2) That the work programme be approved.

**SUBJECT: NEW MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME 2024**

**DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TOWN CLERK**

**REPORT AUTHOR: CHERYL EVANS, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND ELECTIONS MANAGER**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To consider the proposed member induction training for newly elected Members in May 2024.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The training and development of new Members is an important element to ensure transition and progress to achieve Members maximum potential in their roles.
- 2.2 It is recognised that the Council has a significant number of experienced elected Members with considerable knowledge regarding the operation of the Council. We need to ensure that this experience is not lost at the Council as its Membership changes over time.
- 2.3 Councillors have a critical role in the strategic direction of the Council, and of course in the decision-making process. By having local knowledge and a detailed awareness of the operation of the Council, elected Members can make informed decisions regarding the Council.
- 2.4 Member development events support the training of Councillors focusing on all-Member events. It is also possible to offer individual/ group training on request to place an emphasis on developing the skills of different levels of Members more efficiently, as well as resources for specific needs.

## **3. Long Term Training**

In-house provision is tailored around the needs of individual committees and councillors' participation in them. For example, Planning Committee training is provided for all those members who are likely to take part in planning decisions over the course of a year. If members expressed interest in a particular area of council business there is potentially scope for a relevant officer to deliver informal professional guidance aimed at developing the councillor's capacity to function in this area.

### **3.1 New Members**

The training programme for new members will include the induction programme, alongside generic training programmed through the year from in-house provisions and training for specific committees as required, which may include the following:-

Engagement with Vision 2025 and beyond

Governance

Constitution including Member protocols, social media, gifts and hospitality

Role of members – in wards/the council/back benchers

Local government structure

Local government finance

Data Protection framework

Key organisational strategies – customer experience

Key framework documents – complaints, IMP's, officer appointments

The induction programme is designed to comprise of sessions whereby new members are informed of the key things they really need to know upon becoming a City Councillor, together with opportunities to meet key officers and understand the service areas they are responsible for.

- 3.2 Attached as **Appendix A** for consideration is a draft Induction Programme for newly elected Members.

#### **4. Strategic Priorities**

- 4.1 There are no direct implications for the Council's Strategic Priorities arising as a result of this report.

#### **5. Organisational Impacts**

##### **5.1 Finance**

There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of this report.

##### **5.2 Legal Implications incl Procurement Rules**

There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of this report.

##### **5.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights**

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Due to the nature of the report, no specific Equality Impact Analysis is required.

#### **6. Recommendation**

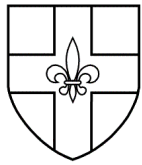
- 6.1 Members feedback/comments on the proposed New Member Induction Programme 2024 is welcomed.

<b>Is this a key decision?</b>	No
<b>Do the exempt information categories apply?</b>	No
<b>Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?</b>	No
<b>How many appendices does the report contain?</b>	One
<b>List of Background Papers:</b>	None

<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Cheryl Evans, Democratic Services and Elections Manager <a href="mailto:Cheryl.evans@lincoln.gov.uk">Cheryl.evans@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
----------------------	--

This page is intentionally blank.





CITY OF  
*Lincoln*  
COUNCIL

**Chief Executive & Town Clerk**

**Angela Andrews CPFA**

City Hall, Beaumont Fee,  
Lincoln. LN1 1DD

Telephone: (01522) 881188

Facsimile: (01522) 873546

Website: **[www.lincoln.gov.uk](http://www.lincoln.gov.uk)**

Minicom: (01522) 873693 - Reception

Cheryl Evans is dealing with this matter.

E-mail: [cheryl.evans@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:cheryl.evans@lincoln.gov.uk)

Direct Line: 01522 873439

Date: 2 May 2024

Dear Councillor

Congratulations on your election as a Member of the City of Lincoln Council.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a number of matters, some of which are statutory requirements and will require your early attention:

**1. Induction Days**

A two-day induction is taking place for all newly elected councillors on Wednesday, 8 May and Thursday, 9 May 2024 in Committee Rooms 1 and 2, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln, commencing at 9.00 am. These sessions will not be repeated so it is strongly recommended that you attend both days. Please arrive at the main entrance of City Hall on Orchard Street and a member of the Democratic Services team will greet you. Please call 01522 873370 if there are any issues. A copy of the induction programme for these two days is attached to this letter.

You will also have your photo taken on the first day of the induction for the Council's website.

**2. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)**

Within 28 days of your election, you are required to register your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. A form is enclosed in your welcome pack for this purpose, together with guidance notes. Further information regarding DPIs will be provided as part of the induction programme.

**3. Membership of Political Groups**

The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 recognises that members of the Council may belong to political groups. There will be an opportunity for you to sign a group membership form via your Group Leader.

#### **4. Councillor Information / Bank Details Form / Data Control Form**

You will find enclosed within your pack, a *New Councillor Tick List*, *Data Control Form* and two payroll forms which you are asked to complete. Please return these forms on the first day of the induction.

If you require any business cards, please notify Democratic Services during the induction.

#### **5. Annual Council Meeting – 21 May 2024**

The first formal meeting of the Council is the Annual Meeting, which takes place on Tuesday, 21 May 2024 at The Guildhall, Saltergate, Lincoln, LN1 1DH, commencing at 11.00 am. The agenda will be sent to you in due course.

#### **6. Access Control Arrangements (New Councillors)**

Access to City Hall is controlled by an access / identification card. You will be issued with an identification card on the first day of the induction. You will also be issued with a permit to give you access to all City Council owned car parks. I have enclosed two car parking permits for the two days until you have been issued with your permit.

A name badge will also be ordered for you following the two-day induction.

#### **7. Tour of the Guildhall**

The Guildhall has been used since its construction in 1520, occupying the whole second floor of the Stonebow, and it hosts our full Council meetings. It houses numerous pieces of regalia, including the sword of Richard II, the Mayor's Chains of Office and the Mayor's posy ring.

As a newly elected councillor you are invited to a tour of the Guildhall. If you are interested in having a tour, please contact Kate Fenn, Civic Manager, via [Kate.Fenn@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:Kate.Fenn@lincoln.gov.uk).

#### **8. Personal Safety for Councillors**

The relationship between councillors and the communities they serve is at the heart of what being a councillor is all about. In order to be a successful councillor, you will need to understand the interests of your local community, which will usually be most effectively achieved by engaging directly with the public. The face-to-face contact when constituents can share problems and concerns is vital to making that relationship work. The Council has developed guidance, based on the guidance issues by the Local Government Association. A useful guide for keeping yourself and others safe is enclosed within your induction pack.

I look forward to meeting you at City Hall in the near future.

Yours sincerely

C Evans

Cheryl Evans

Democratic Services and Elections Manager

# City of Lincoln Council

## Induction for newly elected Councillors

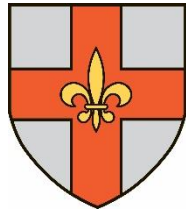
Wednesday 8 May and Thursday 9 May 2024

### WEDNESDAY 8 MAY 2024

- 9:00      **Meet the Chief Executive and Directors** (*Angela Andrews/CMT*)  
*To provide an opportunity to meet with the Council's Chief Executive and Directors for introductions, who will provide a brief overview of Vision 2025 and the service priorities within their respective Directorates*
- 10:00      **Induction Pack and Tour** (*Cheryl Evans*)  
*To include issue of induction pack and overview of the Council's decision-making/committee structure*
- 10:30      **Break**
- 10:45      **Formalities** (*Cheryl Evans*)  
*To include:*
- *Issuing of City Hall access cards*
  - *Taking of photographs for the Council's website and publicity materials*
  - *Completion of necessary paperwork*
- 11:30      **Meet the Officers Session**  
  
*11:30 - Neighbourhood Working*  
*11:50 - Licensing and Anti-Social Behaviour*  
*12:10 - Leisure Services and Provision*
- 12:10      **Lunch**
- 13:00      **Meet the Officers Session**  
  
*13:00 - Customer Services*  
*13:20 - Revenues and Benefits*  
*13:40 - Local Government Finance*
- 14:00      **IT provision**  
*To arrange IT access, set up email accounts and issue new members with tablets*
- 15:00      **Induction close**

## THURSDAY 9 MAY 2024

- 10:00      **Member Code of Conduct and Meeting Procedure Rules**
- 11:00      **Break**
- 11:15      **Meet the Officers Session**  
  
              *11:15 - Environmental Services*  
              *11:35 - Food Health and Safety*  
              *11:55 - Planning*
- 12:15      **Lunch**
- 13:00      **Meet the Officers Session**  
  
              *13:00 – Housing Strategy*  
              *13:20 - Housing Estates*  
              *13:40 - Housing Repairs and Maintenance*  
              *14:00 - Housing Allocations*  
              *14:20 - Private Housing*
- 14:40      **Break**
- 14:50      **Meet the Officers Session**  
  
              *14:50 – Data Protection*  
              *15:10 - Civic Engagements*  
              *15:30 - Communications*  
              *15:50 – Equality and Diversity*
- 16:10      **Induction Close and Feedback Session (Cheryl Evans)**  
              *To provide members with an opportunity to offer any feedback and*  
              *raise any issues or concerns*



CITY OF  
*Lincoln*  
COUNCIL

# **Induction Pack for newly elected Councillors**

## **2024**

This page is intentionally blank.



CITY OF  
*Lincoln*  
COUNCIL

Together, let's deliver  
Lincoln's ambitious future



# Councillor Information Pack

**2024**

# The City of Lincoln Council

As you will be aware, becoming a councillor brings significant responsibilities both as a decision-maker and as a representative for the people of the city. The Councillor Information Pack is intended to act as an introductory guide to the Council from the perspective of a councillor. Given the number of responsibilities the Council has, it can sometimes be daunting trying to work out how to handle a particular issue and whether the Council is even the organisation which has responsibility for it.

The Democratic Services Team is here to offer guidance and help wherever possible, along with other officers and councillors. A number of the questions which are most frequently asked by new councillors are addressed within the induction pack, along with a few handy reference guides.

## Table of Contents

STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL .....	3-4
COUNCILLOR ROLES .....	5
WARDS OF THE CITY .....	6
DECISION-MAKING COMMITTEES .....	7-8
SCRUTINY .....	9-10
THE CONSTITUTION .....	11
DECLARING INTERESTS .....	12-13
MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS .....	14
WORKING WITH OFFICERS .....	15
COUNCILLOR DEVELOPMENT .....	16
PERSONAL SAFETY FOR COUNCILLORS .....	17
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES .....	18
HOUSING SERVICES .....	20-22
OTHER COUNCIL SERVICES .....	23-25
PLANNING .....	26-27
LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL .....	288
USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS .....	299-30



# Structure of the Council

---

## Chief Executive & Town Clerk

Chief Executive / Personal Assistant:	Angela Andrews / Lara Trickett (873292)
Chief Finance Officer	Jaclyn Gibson (873258)
City Solicitor & Monitoring Officer	Carolyn Wheater (873323)
Assistant Director – Shared Revenue and Benefits	Martin Walmsley (873597)
Assistant Director – Transformation and Strategic Development	Emily Holmes (873277)

## Directorate of Communities and Environment

Director / Personal Assistant	Simon Walters / Deborah Clucas (873475)
Assistant Director - Communities and Street Scene	Steve Bird (873421)
Assistant Director - Health and Environment Services	Simon Colburn (873241)
Assistant Director – Planning and City Services	Kieron Manning (873551)

## Directorate of Housing & Investment

Director / Personal Assistant	Daren Turner / Danielle Green (873201)
Assistant Director – Housing	Vacant (873734)
Assistant Director – Investment	Matthew Hillman (873639)

## Directorate of Major Developments

Director / Personal Assistant	Kate Ellis / Lauren Smith (873571)
Assistant Director – Growth and Development	Vacant (873571)
Assistant Director – Western Growth Corridor	Jo Walker (873325)

## Democratic and Electoral Services

Democratic Services and Elections  
Manager:

Cheryl Evans (873370)

Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Cullen (873370) (part-time)

Alison Hewson (873370)

Victoria Poulson (873370)

Claire Turner (873370)

Electoral Services:

Jessie Wheeler (873733)

Clare Stait (873733) (part-time)

# Councillor Roles

---

## Ward Councillors

All councillors have a responsibility for the residents and businesses in the ward they represent. This can include speaking as an advocate for residents at Planning Committee meetings and working to improve the lives of local individuals and communities. However, ward councillors also have a responsibility to the city and the Council as a whole, which can sometimes lead to councillors needing to balance competing priorities. The role is ultimately as varied as the personalities of councillors themselves, with each councillor bringing a different approach to the different demands of each area.

## Portfolio Holders

The Leader of the Council is elected by the Council. The Leader is then able to appoint up to nine portfolio holders who take responsibility for particular areas of the Council's business. This can include leading on policy matters, offering guidance to officers, and communicating with the media. The portfolio roles for 2024/25 are:

- Customer Experience and Review
- Inclusive Economic Growth
- Our People and Resources
- Quality Housing
- Reducing all Kinds Inequality
- Remarkable Place and Addressing the Challenge of Climate Change

## Committee Chairs

Every committee has a chair who has responsibility for controlling and progressing the business of a meeting. The chair has considerable control in a meeting and also holds a casting vote in the event of a tied vote. Officers may also consult with committee chairs on business which is relevant to their committee or on the development of a meeting's agenda.

# Wards of the City

---

## City of Lincoln Council Boundaries

The City of Lincoln Council has eleven wards, with three councillors representing each ward. Elections are held 'by thirds' meaning that one councillor is elected to each of these wards every year, except in the year when Lincolnshire County Council elections are held.

## Lincolnshire County Council Boundaries

Lincoln has eight electoral divisions, each electing one councillor to serve on Lincolnshire County Council. The boundaries of these electoral divisions do not align with the City of Lincoln Council's ward boundaries. Elections for county councillors are held every four years.

## Lincoln Parliamentary Boundaries

Lincoln's parliamentary constituency boundary covers the City of Lincoln, as well as the areas of Skellingthorpe, Bracebridge Heath, and Waddington (which are in North Kesteven District Council's area). The boundary for the Lincoln constituency is currently in the process of being reviewed by the Boundary Commission for England as part of a comprehensive review of all boundaries.

Maps outlining the boundaries for the City Council wards, County Council electoral divisions and the Parliamentary constituency are available from the Elections team.

# Decision-Making Committees

---

## Council

The Council meeting comprises all elected members and is responsible for a significant number of decisions, including setting the budget and the strategic priorities of the Council. Council is also a key meeting for debates about the direction of the city and the local authority, with councillors able to put forward motions regarding relevant areas of business.

## Executive

The Executive comprises those councillors who have been chosen by the Leader to act as portfolio holders for particular areas of business. The Executive takes many of the strategic decisions regarding the operation of the Council. However, all of its decisions must comply with the budget and policy framework set by the Council. In some circumstances it is possible for councillors to challenge a decision taken by the Executive using the 'call-in' process, details of which are highlighted to all councillors when Executive decision are published.

## Shared Revenues & Benefits Joint Committee

The Council operates a shared revenues and benefits service with North Kesteven District Council. Executive members from each council direct the service via this joint committee which operates on a similar basis to the Executive.

## Licensing Committee

The Licensing Committee is responsible for setting the Council's licensing policies for the wide variety of the activities which fall within its remit. Many decisions are delegated to officers and to specialist sub-committees. The Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Sub-Committee is responsible for considering taxi driver licensing, while there are a number of sub-committees which meet to consider the licensing of establishments such as sexual entertainment venues, gambling premises, pubs, and clubs.

## Audit Committee

The Audit Committee provides an independent and high-level focus and review on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards at the Council.

## Planning Committee

The Planning Committee considers applications made for development within the city and is frequently required to make decisions to either approve or reject applications. As a result of this, the Planning Committee often attracts considerable public interest.

# Scrutiny

---

## Introduction to Scrutiny

Non-Executive councillors can be appointed by Council to scrutinise the operation of different kinds of Council business through a number of committees. A key role for all these committees is to hold decision makers to account for their actions and to ensure that the Council and its partners are operating effectively and efficiently.

## Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee

While the other scrutiny committees direct their focus on the role of the Council, the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee has been established to consider matters which affect the broader community and require the input of external organisations.

## Performance Scrutiny Committee

The Performance Scrutiny Committee monitors the operation of the Council's services and finances. This includes taking in-depth looks at areas of particular concern, while searching for opportunities for service improvement or cost management. The Committee also receives regular reports from portfolio holders who are then held to account for performance within their area at regular portfolio under scrutiny sessions. There is also a Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee which reports to the Performance Scrutiny Committee.

## Policy Scrutiny Committee

The Policy Scrutiny Committee considers the development and review of the Council's policies and strategies. This can include looking at the detailed reviews of Council services and staff structures.

## Select Scrutiny Committee

The Select Scrutiny Committee has two main purposes. Its first is to consider any requests for the 'call-in' of an Executive decision, which happens when councillors have concerns about the process or rationale behind an Executive decision. The second purpose is to sit as the Council's crime and disorder committee which works alongside representatives from Lincolnshire Police to improve public safety within the city.

## Housing Scrutiny Committee

The Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of Performance Scrutiny Committee. It was established to increase engagement between scrutiny councillors and Tenant Advisory Panel representatives. It considers all Housing Landlord related issues including performance, policy and procedural changes.



# The Constitution

---

The Council has a written constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made, and the procedures that are followed. Full copies of the Constitution are available online or in the Democratic Services office.

The Constitution is several hundred pages in length and updated regularly. It is divided into nine parts which are summarised below:

**Summary and Explanation** – This is a short introduction to the nature and purpose of the Constitution.

**Articles** – The articles of the Constitution set out a number of rights and powers held by different individuals and bodies, as well as the operation of the Constitution itself.

**Responsibility for Functions** – The scheme of delegations sets out which committees are responsible for each decision, as well as details of the delegations to officers.

**Procedural Rules** – Councillors are encouraged to make themselves familiar with the Council Procedure Rules which cover their participation in Council and committee meetings.

**Codes and Protocols** – These contain a number of guidelines covering behaviour in different circumstances, including the Member Code of Conduct, and the rules concerning participation at meetings of the Planning Committee.

**Members' Allowance Scheme** – The annually-agreed scheme sets out the basic allowance for councillors and any allowances for special responsibilities.

**Member-Officer Protocol** – This protocol sets out how councillors and officers should behave towards one another.

**Petition Scheme** – The scheme sets out rules for the submission of petitions and guidelines on the action to be taken if a certain number of signatures is reached.

**Management Structure** – This shows management structure, including the departments and responsibilities of senior officers.

# Declaring Interests

## Register of Interests

All councillors are required by law to make a written declaration of any 'disclosable pecuniary interests' which they or their spouse have regarding the following topics:

- Corporate Tenancies
- Contracts
- Employment, Office, Trade or Profession
- Land
- Licences
- Securities
- Sponsorship

When you begin as a councillor, you will be given the relevant form and guidance which will allow you to complete it. It is important that the form is updated with any changes within 28 days of a change being made. The register is then published on our website and also available at City Hall, although it is possible to exclude any 'sensitive' interests with the approval of the Monitoring Officer.

## Gifts and Hospitality

If you receive any gifts or hospitality from any person or body (other than the Council) with a value in excess of £50 you must register this with the Monitoring Officer within 28 days. This information is then placed on a public register.



## Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs)

When at a meeting councillors must make a declaration if any item of business relates to their disclosable pecuniary interests. The councillor cannot then take part in that item of business at the meeting.

## Dispensations

In certain circumstances, the Monitoring Officer may grant councillors dispensations to take part in the consideration of items in which they have a DPI. These can be granted if, for example, the political balance is likely to be distorted by the number of declarations being made or the meeting will become inquorate (meaning that insufficient councillors are in the meeting for it to take place or continue).

## Other Interests

In addition to the nationally-set categories for DPIs, the Council has also agreed a number of additional interests which may affect a councillor's participation in meetings, including membership of certain types of bodies. These must also be declared at any relevant meetings. A separate guide to interests has been produced for councillors and can be requested from Democratic Services if you have not already been provided with a copy.

## Council Tax

Councillors should note it can be a criminal offence to vote on matters relating to setting the council tax if in arrears with your own payments. Please seek the guidance of the Monitoring Officer if in any doubt whatsoever as to whether you may be affected.

# Motions and Questions

---

## Motions

Councillors may put forward motions matters to be debated at a meeting regarding an area relevant to the Council or, if submitted to a committee, to the business of that committee. Motions of this kind are called 'motions on notice' and, as the name suggests, must be submitted in advance of a meeting in accordance with the rules set down in the Council Procedure Rules.

Motions must be submitted to the Chief Executive and Town Clerk or Democratic Services at least seven working days before the meeting at which it is proposed to be considered. The motion must be signed by at least two councillors, who will then act as proposer and seconder. If a motion is similar in terms to one rejected in the previous six months, the motion must be signed by five councillors before it can be accepted.

Councillors are also able to move procedural motions at any meeting which relate to the proceedings of a meeting in progress, as specified in the Council Procedure Rules. During the debate on a motion councillors are able to put forward amendments to the motion under discussion. The amendment cannot have the effect of simply reversing the original motion.

Procedural motions are, like amendments, made at the meeting without prior notice being required. These include closure motions and it is also possible for councillors to vote to adjourn a debate or the meeting itself.

Motions can also be used in other circumstances, such as moving to close a meeting or to suspend a particular Council Procedure Rule.

## Councillor Questions

At meetings of Council, councillors also have the opportunity to put questions to portfolio holders or the chairs of committees. These questions have to be submitted by 10:00 at least two clear working days before the meeting is held. In practice, for a Council meeting on Tuesday this will mean a deadline of 10:00 on Friday.

# Working with Officers

---

## Member-Officer Protocol

All councillors and officers are subject to the Member-Officer Protocol. The protocol sets out detailed guidelines for the behaviour of councillors and officers towards one another. It must be observed at all times by councillors and officers and is contained within the Council's Constitution.

## Respect

The working relationship between officers and councillors has to be built upon mutual respect. It is also necessary that both councillors and officers have a clear idea of the differences between their respective roles. Councillors have a higher-level role than officers and determine the overall direction of the Council, but this does not give individual councillors an automatic right to overrule existing policies or to ignore professional advice and officer decisions.

## Escalating Concerns

Sometimes officers may be unable to help you in the way that you have requested. If you are concerned that an officer has misinterpreted a request or not provided the level of service you expect, you should explain this to them clearly and politely. If you are still concerned you should raise your issue through the officer's line management. There are likely to be occasions where officers will be limited in the assistance they can offer either by the law or policy. As ever, it is important to try to understand an issue from another person's angle and to always treat others with respect and courtesy.

It is also possible to refer enquiries via designated officers for each directorate who can arrange responses within agreed timeframes. Please contact Democratic Services for further details regarding this.

## Politics

Councillors are directly elected politicians and are inherently politically active. However, officers are considerably more limited in their political involvement. While most officers are able to engage in some forms of political activity outside their employment, there is a duty for officers to be impartial in their working life. Councillors should respect the limits placed upon officers and should not seek to pressure officers to act otherwise. Equally, councillors must ensure that they do not use council resources for political purposes.

# Councillor Development

---

## 'Mandatory' Training

Councillors have a right to take part in meetings to which they have been appointed by Council or where attending as a substitute for another councillor. However, Council has determined that councillors may not serve on the Planning Committee, Licensing Committee, or the licensing sub-committees if they have not undertaken the training provided for these meetings.

This training is provided to members of these committees, as they are likely to be making highly personal and technical decisions in relation to an individual's application. These decisions are also particularly susceptible to challenge by applicants and so the Council has a duty to ensure councillors are properly trained in reaching a legally-valid decision.

## Feeding into the Councillor Development Programme

Democratic Services act as a first point of contact in arranging training and briefing for councillors. Progress in this area is regularly reported to the Ethics and Engagement Committee which oversees councillor development within the Council. However, contributions from councillors who do not serve on that committee are welcomed. If you have any suggestions for additional training or improvements which can be made please contact Democratic Services.

# Personal Safety for Councillors

---

## Keeping Yourself Safe

The relationship between councillors and the communities they serve is at the heart of what being a councillor is all about. In order to be a successful councillor you will need to understand the interests of your local community, which will usually be most effectively achieved by engaging directly with the public. The face-to-face contact when constituents can share problems and concerns is vital to making that relationship work. The Council has developed guidance, based on the guidance issues by the Local Government Association. Some of the key points are highlighted below:

## Key Tips for Keeping Yourself and Others Safe

- Consider the use of a lone working device, such as a reliance device, which can be provided by Democratic Services.
- Always let your partner, a friend or relative know where you are.
- Make sure your mobile phone is always charged.
- Whenever possible, avoid meeting in locations where other people are not nearby and able to help in case of any problems.
- If you hold a ward surgery,
  - try not to be alone in an otherwise empty building;
  - consider the room layout and seat yourself near the exit door;
  - make a record of any incidents; and
  - know what to do in an emergency.
- If you visit a resident at their home, try to do so in daylight hours and let someone know who and where you are visiting.
- Try to remain calm whenever dealing with people. You will often be dealing with people in stressful situations and responding aggressively is only likely to make a situation worse.
- If you are in a position where you consider yourself to be at risk, try to remove yourself from it as soon as possible. This can include ending a conversation and seeking to resolve problems in a different manner.
- Report any problems you experience to Democratic Services. This can then be compiled into incident reports which can protect others from dangerous people.
- Consider what telephone number is listed on the website.

# Environmental Services

---

## Anti-Social Behaviour

Where possible, it is recommended that neighbours should try first to resolve any problems with one another. If this does not work, the Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour Team (PPASB) can be contacted on 01522 873378. An online anti-social behaviour form is also available. The Council can then work with complainants to find a suitable solution to the problem.

## Dog Fouling

The Council's PPASB Team can advise on the areas listed below and can be contacted by emailing [PPASB@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:PPASB@lincoln.gov.uk) or calling 01522 873378.

- Care of stray dogs
- Enforcement of Dog Control and Dog Fouling Legislation
- Animal Licensing Activities
- Enforcement of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (barking dogs, etc)
- Promotion of responsible dog ownership

## Garden Waste

Residents can join the Council's green waste scheme, for which an annual charge is payable, by visiting [www.lincoln.gov.uk/garden](http://www.lincoln.gov.uk/garden) or calling 01522 873423.

## Bulky Waste Collections

A free collection service is available for residents who:

- have a disability;
- are eligible for a state pension/pension credits; or
- are in receipt of a means tested benefit, such as Housing or Council Tax Support (excluding Child Tax Credits and Working Tax Credits).

Fridges/freezers cannot be taken by the free service.

The Council also works in partnership with West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) to deliver a competitively priced charged bulky waste collection system for those who do not qualify for a free service. Details are on WLDC website

Otherwise, large and bulky items can be taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centre at Great Northern Terrace, where there is no charge for disposal.



## Waste Collection and Recycling

If a resident's waste or recycling has not been collected they should contact Customer Services by calling 01522 881188. Any concerns regarding the use of bins, bins being left on streets after the collection date, can also be referred through Customer Services. Collection dates are listed on the Council's website.

A full index of materials covered by recycling services is available on the council's web site.

# Housing Services

---

## Applying for a Council Tenancy

The Council runs a joint choice-based lettings scheme to assist in finding a suitable home in Lincoln. The choice-based lettings scheme gives residents more choice in the area that they move to and the type of property that they would like to live in. Social housing across central Lincolnshire is first offered to families or individuals with the greatest housing need. Councillors and officers cannot directly influence the position of applicants on the waiting list, but can offer advice on ensuring that all of an applicant's personal circumstances, such as any medical conditions, are properly considered.

If residents want to apply for housing in Lincoln or North Kesteven they need to register with [Lincs Homefinder](#). More information is available on the Lincs Homefinder website, City of Lincoln Council website and advice can be given by Lincoln or North Kesteven through their respective teams.

Lincoln Housing Solutions Team: [housingsolutions@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:housingsolutions@lincoln.gov.uk) or 01522 873777.

North Kesteven Housing Options Team: [housingoptions@n-kesteven.gov.uk](mailto:housingoptions@n-kesteven.gov.uk) or 01529 414155.

Applicants must complete an application form and provide supporting information, which, depending on their eligibility, will enable them to bid for affordable homes in the location of their choice. Each of the partners have their own Allocations/Lettings Policy and criteria for banding an application. Guidance on the criteria applied to applicants can be found on each authority's website.

A successful applicant will be selected from those who have placed bids for a particular property and who meet the qualifying criteria. Selection will be based on the relevant needs band, followed by the length of time an applicant has been in a particular band and any additional criteria stated within the advert.

## Council Housing Repairs

The Council's repairs are coordinated by Customer Services and Resource Planners based at Hamilton House on Beever Street. Any repairs for Council tenants can then be arranged for completion by the in-house Housing Repairs Services or one of the Council's specialist contractors.

Residents can report a repair by:

- telephoning customer services on 01522 873333;

- visiting City Hall in person during normal office hours; or
- emailing [customer.services@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@lincoln.gov.uk) or submitting an online form.

Emergency repairs can be reported by calling 01522 534747. If a resident is struggling to reach a satisfactory resolution to their housing repair request, it can be useful to discuss the problem with a Resource Planner. Alternatively, the Council's Housing Appeals Panel can consider housing complaints which have already exhausted the internal complaints procedures.

## Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support

Although the national rollout of 'Universal Credit' continues, people can make an application for Housing and/or Council Tax Support if they:

- Work full or part-time and receive a low wage
- Receive Employment and Support Allowance, Jobseekers' Allowance or any other state benefit
- Have savings less than £16,000 (this does not apply if you receive Pension Guarantee Credit)
- Pay rent to a private landlord, Housing Association or Local Authority
- Pay Council Tax on their home

The list above is not exhaustive, so if in doubt a claim should be made and eligibility/entitlement will be determined by the Council's Benefits Service.

Initial applications for benefit support can be made via the Council's website [Benefits - Apply for housing benefit and Council Tax Support – City of Lincoln Council](#) .

## Supported Housing

The Supported Housing Service is designed to help improve older tenants' quality of life. There are three types of service available:

- Sheltered housing with on-site support provides accommodation under one roof, with communal bathrooms and laundry facilities as well as common rooms, where residents can meet and take part in leisure activities. This will also include an extra care facility at De Wint Court which provides high quality accommodation for older persons with a range of additional care needs, provided through Lincolnshire County Council support. Facilities at De Wint Court include sensory gardens, treatment rooms and a restaurant and is supported by a dedicated on-site management.

- Grouped housing with on-site support comprises small blocks of one-bedroom flats or bungalows grouped around a community centre, where the residents can meet and take part in leisure activities.
- Dispersed alarms allow alarm equipment to be installed in Customers homes, monitored by our 24/7 Lincare Service enabling them to call for help and assistance.

Applications for sheltered or grouped housing should be made through Housing Solutions by emailing [housingsolutions@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:housingsolutions@lincoln.gov.uk) or calling 01522 873777. Applications for dispersed alarms can be made by contacting the Lincare Control Room on 0300 303 4430, completing an online application form or by emailing [lincare@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:lincare@lincoln.gov.uk)

# Other Council Services

---

## Allotments

Lincoln's residents are able to apply for allotment plots within the city. This can be done via the Council's website. Alternatively, enquiries can be made by calling customer services on 01522 873423.

## Advice on Welfare, Money and Benefits

The Council has Welfare Advisors who are able to guide residents through the benefits to which they may be entitled. Not all benefits will be administered by the Council, including Universal Credit which is processed by the Department for Work and Pensions. The Welfare Team can be contacted by calling 01522 873382.

## Council Tax and Business Rates

The Council operates a shared revenues and benefits service with North Kesteven District Council. All enquiries regarding Council Tax and Business Rates can be made via the City of Lincoln Council. Enquiries can be made as follows: Council Tax via 01522 873355 and Business Rates via 01522 873342.

## Customer Services Opening Hours

City Hall is open at the following times:

- Monday: 9am - 5pm
- Tuesday: 9am - 5pm
- Wednesday: 10am - 5pm
- Thursday: 9am - 5pm
- Friday: 9am - 4.30pm

Members of the public attending a public committee meetings in the evening are able to access the committee rooms via the Orchard Street entrance.

## Elections – Applying to Vote

Residents are encouraged to register to vote online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) . If people do not have access to the internet they should contact the Elections Team ([electoral@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:electoral@lincoln.gov.uk) or 01522 873733). Application forms for including postal and

proxy voting can be obtained from the Elections Team. Additional information can be obtained from [www.yourvotematters.co.uk](http://www.yourvotematters.co.uk)

## Highways

The majority of roads and pavements within Lincoln are the responsibility of the Highways Department at Lincolnshire County Council. Problems can be reported directly to the Lincoln department by calling 01522 782070 or emailing:

[customerservices@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

## Neighbourhood Working

The primary purpose of neighbourhood working is to work in partnership with residents, local businesses and organisations to deliver creative, innovative solutions to identified issues within a community. This is done by forming Neighbourhood Boards or forums where issues and ideas can be openly discussed. The team is currently focusing on the revitalisation of Sincil Bank and is located at 30 Portland Street. If you have any queries in the meantime, then please contact Paul Carrick on 07197 053128.

## Resident Parking Permits

The Resident's Parking Scheme is in force from Monday to Saturday from 8am to 6pm. During these times, a valid permit is required to be displayed. For areas of the city covered by a scheme, applications for permits can be made online at [www.lincoln.gov.uk](http://www.lincoln.gov.uk). Alternatively, enquiries can be made via the Parking Services team by emailing [city.services@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:city.services@lincoln.gov.uk) or calling 01522 873497.

The schemes only apply in certain areas of the city. The process for requesting a new scheme be considered is currently under review and will be circulated once agreed by the Portfolio Holder.

## Safeguarding

Any concerns should be submitted via the Council's intranet site at: [Safeguarding Vulnerable People Form \(Stage 1\) - Dash Staff Portal \(achieveservice.com\)](#). If you are not able to complete the online form, please contact Customer Services on 01522 881188 or by emailing [safeguarding@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@lincoln.gov.uk).

## Licensing

The Council's Licensing Team can take enquiries on a wide variety of licensing queries including hackney carriages, private hire vehicles, alcohol, temporary events, gambling, and sex establishments. This can include giving assistance to potential applicants or guidance to residents and councillors on their rights to raise concerns about the conduct

of a licensee. The Licensing Team can be contacted by emailing [Licensing@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:Licensing@lincoln.gov.uk) or calling 01522 873714.

# Planning

---

## Requirement for Planning Permission

Certain types of minor changes to your home without can be made without needing to apply for planning permission. These are called Permitted Development Rights. The [Planning Portal Interactive House](#) provides an idea as to whether planning permission may be required for a particular proposal.

However, not all properties have the benefit of Permitted Development Rights, including flats, houses with specific allocations (Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings or Article 4 Directions) or properties which have had their Permitted Development Rights removed. The Council's Development Team can confirm whether your property has had its permitted development rights removed by calling 01522 873474 or emailing [developmentteam@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:developmentteam@lincoln.gov.uk)

## Applying for Planning Permission

The Council welcomes and strongly encourages discussions with homeowners or developers before submitting a planning application. This service is called the 'Pre-application Planning Advice'. And provides an opportunity to explore a proposal with planners. This can be arranged by calling 01522 873474 or emailing [developmentteam@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:developmentteam@lincoln.gov.uk)

Planning application can be submitted online through the [Planning Portal website](#). Alternatively application forms can be downloaded from the Council's website or collected from the fifth floor of City Hall in the Planning Reception Area.

## Speaking at the Planning Committee

Councillors are able to speak to the Planning Committee as 'ward advocates' in relation to a planning application. This gives councillors the opportunity to speak for up to five minutes and can be in addition to the contributions of other councillors and public speakers. Any councillor wishing to speak must register to do so by 16:00 on the Tuesday immediately preceding the meeting. If a councillor is speaking as an advocate they should not take part in voting on that item if they are also acting as a member of the Planning Committee.



## Trees

Many trees can be maintained by their owner without requiring the involvement of the Council. If the tree is subject to a Tree Preservation Order or stands within a Conservation Area, special permission must be sought from the Council before carrying out any work. For any enquiries regarding either applying for or working with an existing Tree Preservation Order/ Conservation Order you should contact the Council's Arboricultural Officer by calling Customer Services on 01522 873423.

The Arboricultural Officer can also offer advice regarding any work required to trees owned by the Council. Lincolnshire County Council's Highways Department can contact property owners whose privately owned trees or plants are overhanging a pavement or highway.

# Lincolnshire County Council

Lincolnshire operates a two-tier system of local government, meaning that responsibilities are split between district councils (lower tier) and the county council (upper tier). In other parts of the country, an individual local authority can take responsibility for all local government services. Unlike much of the rest of Lincolnshire, the City of Lincoln Council does not host any parish councils.

It can often be confusing trying to work out which services fall within the remit of each local authority, especially for residents who are unaware of the distinction. The table below provides a short guide to the different services provided at each level of local government. However, it should be stressed that councils have some freedom to develop services to benefit the community which could be undertaken at either level of local government.

City of Lincoln Council	Lincolnshire County Council
Building Control Car Parks Cemeteries and Crematorium Council Tax and Housing Benefits Development Control (Planning) Electoral Registration and Elections Environmental Health Housing Leisure Licensing Parks, open spaces, play areas Property and Land Searches Street cleaning Public toilets Waste Collection	Adult Social Services Children's Social Services Highways Maintenance Libraries and Archives Public Health Public Transport Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths Schools and Other Education Services Street Lighting and Street Furniture Trading Standards Traffic Management and Planning Waste Disposal

In the City of Lincoln there are eight county council electoral divisions which each return one county councillor at its four-yearly elections.

# Useful Contact Details

## Council

Service	Telephone	Email
Anti-Social Behaviour	01522 87(3378)	<a href="mailto:PPASB@lincoln.gov.uk">PPASB@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Business Rates	01522 87(3342)	<a href="mailto:Revenues@lincoln.gov.uk">Revenues@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Civic Office	01522 87(3303)	<a href="mailto:civic@lincoln.gov.uk">civic@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Communications	01522 87(3384)	<a href="mailto:communications@lincoln.gov.uk">communications@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Council Tax	01522 87(3355)	<a href="mailto:council.tax@lincoln.gov.uk">council.tax@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Customer Services	01522 881188	<a href="mailto:customerservices@lincoln.gov.uk">customerservices@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Democratic Services	01522 87(3370)	<a href="mailto:democratic.services@lincoln.gov.uk">democratic.services@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Elections	01522 87(3733)	<a href="mailto:electoral@lincoln.gov.uk">electoral@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Environmental Services	01522 87(3249)	<a href="mailto:environmental.health@lincoln.gov.uk">environmental.health@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Guildhall	01522 541727	<a href="mailto:civic@lincoln.gov.uk">civic@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Housing	01522 87(3333)	<a href="mailto:customerservices@lincoln.gov.uk">customerservices@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
IT Helpdesk	01522 87(3327)	<a href="mailto:ithelpdesk@lincoln.gov.uk">ithelpdesk@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Licensing	01522 87(3714)	<a href="mailto:licensing@lincoln.gov.uk">licensing@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Out of Hours Housing Repairs	01522 534747	N/A
Planning	01522 87(3484)	<a href="mailto:development.control@lincoln.gov.uk">development.control@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Housing Solutions	01522 87(3777)	<a href="mailto:customerservices@lincoln.gov.uk">customerservices@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Recycling and waste	01522 87(3423)	<a href="mailto:customerservices@lincoln.gov.uk">customerservices@lincoln.gov.uk</a>
Welfare, Money and Benefits Advice	01522 87(3382)	<a href="mailto:welfare@lincoln.gov.uk">welfare@lincoln.gov.uk</a>

East Lindsey Council – 01507 601111

Lincolnshire Police – 01522 532222

Lincoln BIG – 01522 545233

Lincoln University – 01522 882000

North Kesteven Council – 01529 414155

Lincolnshire County Council – 01522 552222

South Kesteven Council – 01476 406080

North Lincolnshire Council Highways –  
01522 782070

West Lindsey Council - 01427 676676

### New Councillor Tick list

This sheet is produced as a guide to the paperwork provided to new councillors. Please complete the form below and the attached forms as required. If you require any guidance or assistance, please feel free to contact Democratic Services by emailing [democratic.services@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@lincoln.gov.uk), calling 01522 873370, or visiting City Hall.

#### **CONTACT DETAILS**

If you would prefer to collect Council post from City Hall please tick the box below. If you are happy for either your home or mobile telephone numbers to be given to the public please tick the relevant boxes. Any emails from council officers will be sent to your @lincoln.gov.uk address – any other email address provided will be used only if necessary and will not be provided to the public.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postal Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Collect post  
from City Hall

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Home Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Public

**Mobile Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Public

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Acceptance of Office** ☐ Signed

You may have signed the register for the acceptance of office by elected members at the count venue immediately following your election. If not, this should be signed in the presence of an appropriate officer. If you are unable to attend on the induction days arranged, please contact Democratic Services.

**Payroll Form** ☐ Completed

Both sides of this form need to be completed in order to claim any member allowances to which you are entitled.

**New Starter Form** ☐ Attached

This form replaces the previous P46 form from HM Revenues & Customs.

**Photograph** ☐ Snapped

There will be an opportunity for you to have your photograph taken during your induction session. This can also be arranged for another time by request.

**ICT/Paperless Working** ☐ Signed

The Councillors' IT Policy covers, among other items, IT allowances and the manner in which the Council's IT equipment should be used. In order to make full use of the Council's IT facilities, this form and the paperless working should be signed and returned.

**Data Controller** ☐ Acknowledged

If you are handling the data of any residents, you are considered a data controller and will comply with data protection legislation.

**Register of Interests** ☐ Completed

The Register of Interests is maintained by Democratic Services and is a public document. It is essential that your interests form is filled in accurately and promptly and reviewed regularly.

**Swipe Card** ☐ Issued

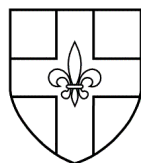
A swipe card to access City Hall can be arranged through Democratic Services. This will usually be carried out as part of an induction session.

**Printed Materials** ☐ Requested

Business cards and ward surgery leaflets are printed on a set schedule. If you require any to be printed you should discuss this with Democratic Services.

**Car registration number:** \_\_\_\_\_

Councillors are entitled to use City of Lincoln Council owned car parks around Lincoln when carrying out council business. In order for a parking permit to be arranged, please fill in the registration number(s) of the car(s) you would like to use.



CITY OF  
*Lincoln*  
COUNCIL

### **SALARY CREDIT DETAILS**

**PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM IN BLACK INK AND USE BLOCK CAPITALS**

#### **PERSONAL DETAILS**

<b>SURNAME</b>	
<b>FIRST NAME</b>	
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>CX</b>
<b>POST TITLE</b>	<b>COUNCILLOR</b>
<b>DATE OF APPOINTMENT</b>	
<b>NATIONAL INSURANCE NO</b>	
<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b>	
<b>ADDRESS</b>	

#### **BANK DETAILS**

<b>BANK SORT CODE</b>	
<b>BANK NAME</b>	
<b>BANK BRANCH NAME</b>	
<b>BANK ADDRESS</b>	
<b>ACCOUNT NAME</b>	
<b>ACCOUNT NO</b>	

**SIGNATURE**.....

**DATE**.....

PLEASE TURN OVER AND COMPLETE THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS FORM.

### **PAYSLIP DELIVERY DETAILS**

The City of Lincoln can deliver your payslips by email if you wish. Your payslip will be sent as a PDF attachment to the email address that you specify below. Please be aware that once the email leaves the City of Lincoln Council it cannot be tracked or traced so it is most important that you update the Payroll office if your email address changes.

Please remember who else may have access to your email, if you share an email address you may wish to set up a new mailbox to receive your payslip.

<b>I would like my payslip sent to the following email address:</b>
<b>I certify that this is my correct address and that I am responsible for notifying the City of Lincoln Council payroll department if I change this.</b>
<b>SIGNED</b>

**FULL NAME (PLEASE PRINT)** .....

**DATE**.....





Do not send this form to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

## Instructions for employer

Use this starter checklist to gather information about your new employee if they do not have a P45. You can also use this form if they have a student loan (whether or not they have a P45). Use the information to help fill in your first Full Payment Submission (FPS) for this employee. If you have already submitted your first FPS, keep using the tax code in that FPS until HMRC sends you a new tax code. If the employee gives you their P45 after the first FPS submission, use the tax code shown in parts 2 and 3 of the P45. You must keep the information recorded on the starter checklist for the current and next 3 tax years. This form is for your use only.

## Instructions for employee

Fill in this form if you do not have a P45 (a document you get from your employer when you stop working for them). You should also fill in this form if you have a student loan (whether or not you've a P45). Give the completed form to your employer as soon as possible. They need this information to tell HMRC about you and help them to use the right tax code. Make sure you answer the questions correctly. If you do not, you may pay the wrong amount of tax or student loan deductions.

## Employee's personal details

<div>1 Last name</div> <div><input type="text"/></div>	<div>5 Home address</div> <div><input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></div>
<div>2 First names</div> <div>Do not enter initials or shortened names for example, Jim for James or Liz for Elizabeth</div> <div><input type="text"/> <input type="text"/></div>	<div>6 National Insurance number (if known)</div> <div><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/></div>
<div>3 What is your sex?</div> <div>As shown on your birth certificate or gender recognition certificate</div> <div>Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/></div>	<div>7 Employment start date DD MM YYYY</div> <div><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/></div>
<div>4 Date of birth DD MM YYYY</div> <div><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/></div>	

Continue on the next page

## Employee statement

These questions will help you to choose the statement that matches your circumstances. The statement you choose helps your employer to apply the correct tax code.

**8 Do you have another job?**

Yes ☐ Put an 'X' in the statement C box below

No ☐ Go to question 9

**9 Do you receive payments from a State, workplace or private pension?**

Yes ☐ Put an 'X' in the statement C box below

No ☐ Go to question 10

**10 Since 6 April have you received payments from:**

- another job which has ended or any of the following taxable benefits
- Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Incapacity Benefit

Yes ☐ Put an 'X' in the statement B box below

No ☐ Put an 'X' in the statement A box below

For more information about tax codes, go to [www.gov.uk/tax-codes](http://www.gov.uk/tax-codes)

Statement A <input type="checkbox"/> Current personal allowance	Statement B <input type="checkbox"/> Current personal allowance on a Week 1/Month 1 basis	Statement C <input type="checkbox"/> Tax Code BR
<b>Key</b> This is my first job since 6 April and since the 6 April I have not received payments from any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobseeker's Allowance</li> <li>• Employment and Support Allowance</li> <li>• Incapacity Benefit</li> </ul>	<b>Key</b> Since 6 April I have had another job but I do not have a P45. And/or since the 6 April I have received payments from any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobseeker's Allowance</li> <li>• Employment and Support Allowance</li> <li>• Incapacity Benefit</li> </ul>	<b>Key</b> I have another job and/or I am in receipt of a State, workplace or private pension.
<b>Key</b> Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) is an unemployment benefit which can be claimed while looking for work. Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is a benefit which can be claimed if you have a disability or health condition that affects how much you can work. Incapacity Benefit is help if you could not work because of an illness or disability before 31 January 2011. State Pension is a pension paid when you reach State Pension age. Workplace pension is a pension which was arranged by your employer and is being paid to you. Private pension is a pension arranged by you and is being paid to you. Please note that no other Government or HMRC paid benefits need to be considered when completing this form.		

---

## Student loans

**11 Do you have a student or postgraduate loan?**

Yes ☐ Go to question 12

No ☐ Go straight to the Declaration

**12 Do any of the following statements apply:**

- you're still studying on a course that your student loan relates to
- you completed or left your course after the start of the current tax year, which started on 6 April
- you've already repaid your loan in full
- you're paying the Student Loans Company by Direct Debit from your bank to manage your end of loan repayments

Yes ☐ Go straight to the Declaration

No ☐ Go to question 13

**13 To avoid repaying more than you need to, tick the correct student loan or loans that you have – use the guidance on the right to help you.**

Please tick all that apply

Plan 1 ☐

Plan 2 ☐

Plan 4 ☐

Postgraduate loan (England and Wales only) ☐

Employees, for more information about the type of loan you have or to check your balance, go to [www.gov.uk/sign-in-to-manage-your-student-loan-balance](http://www.gov.uk/sign-in-to-manage-your-student-loan-balance)

Employers, for guidance on student loans and which plan or loan type to use if your employee has selected more than one, go to [www.gov.uk/guidance/special-rules-for-student-loans](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/special-rules-for-student-loans)

**You have Plan 1 if any of the following apply:**

- you lived in Northern Ireland when you started your course
- you lived in England or Wales and started your course before 1 September 2012

**You have Plan 2 if:**

You lived in England or Wales and started your course on or after 1 September 2012.

**You have Plan 4 if:**

You lived in Scotland and applied through the Students Award Agency Scotland (SAAS) when you started your course.

**You have a postgraduate loan if any of the following apply:**

- you lived in England and started your postgraduate master's course on or after 1 August 2016
- you lived in Wales and started your postgraduate master's course on or after 1 August 2017
- you lived in England or Wales and started your postgraduate doctoral course on or after 1 August 2018

---

## Declaration

I confirm that the information I've given on this form is correct.

**Full name** Use capital letters

**Signature**

**Date** DD MM YYYY

---

## Give this form to your employer

Your employer will use the information to make sure you pay the right amount of tax.

Do not send this form to HMRC.

---

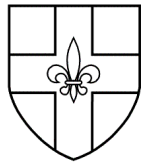
## Employer guidance

For information on how to work out your new employee's tax code, go to [www.gov.uk/new-employee-tax-code](http://www.gov.uk/new-employee-tax-code)

Use Statement A, B or C that your employee has chosen in the employee statement section and apply the tax code below:

- Statement A - use the current personal allowance
- Statement B - use the current personal allowance on a 'week 1/month 1' basis
- Statement C - use tax code BR

This page is intentionally blank.



CITY OF  
**Lincoln**  
COUNCIL

**Chief Executive & Town Clerk**  
**Angela Andrews CPFA**  
City Hall, Beaumont Fee  
Lincoln, LN1 1DB  
Telephone: (01522) 873387  
Website: **www.lincoln.gov.uk**  
Minicomms:(01522) 873693 - Reception

**TO ALL NEWLY ELECTED CITY OF  
LINCOLN COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**Cheryl Evans** is dealing with this matter  
Direct Line: **(01522) 873439**  
E-Mail: [cheryl.evans@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:cheryl.evans@lincoln.gov.uk)

Date: 2 May 2024

## **YOUR PAPERLESS WORKING OPTIONS**

Dear Councillor,

The Council promotes paperless working and enables its councillors to receive their committee documents electronically, via the android device issued to all councillors rather than in printed form. Most councillors opt for the paperless option.

The android device will be set up to receive any committee papers, as well as giving you access to your Council emails and diary, as well as other tools.

### **Paperless working provides:**

- bespoke software (modern.gov) for committee agenda, which allows you to:
  - make personal notes and annotations to committee documents;
  - have secure access to internal or private documents;
  - synchronise your calendar with the committee timetable;
- instant access to your Council emails;
- access to all your documents in one place, as they are saved on the tablet for up to six months and can still be used even if you lose access to an internet connection; and
- prevents considerable financial and environmental waste through circulation of printed papers.

Democratic Services can support with paperless working, including one-to-one training on the use of your tablet and continued support as and when required.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

*C Evans*

**Cheryl Evans**  
**Democratic Services and Elections Manager**

This page is intentionally blank.

## **COUNCILLORS' ICT USAGE AGREEMENT**

This agreement should be read in conjunction with the Members' Code of Conduct and covers the core requirements for usage of ICT equipment and service provided by the Council.

### **Provision of ICT Equipment**

Elected councillors can choose from a range of options as to how they access council services. Provision is via android tablet, ICT Provision in the Members' Room, or by remote access using their own computer. The option of a mobile / smart phone is available to executive councillors.

### **Training and Development**

The Council will provide training opportunities at the Council's expense on all aspects of Council related use of the software/hardware. All councillors must complete the online Cyber Security and Data Protection training 'Cyber Ninja's for councillors' accredited by the National Cyber Security Centre on induction and updated annually. This training can be found on the Council's intranet [Data Protection - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

### **Conditions of usage**

In order to utilise Council provided ICT Equipment and services, the Council's policies must be observed. Key elements are outlined below. More information can be found in the Council's ICT Security and other policies including the Council's Data Protection Policy.

### **General**

#### Acceptable Use

- Council ICT equipment is provided for councillors to use in connection with Council business only.

## Insurance

- Security – reasonable care must be exercised in order to prevent theft, loss or damage at all times. Specifically, any mobile devices, for example laptops, must not be left unattended.
- Transit – ICT equipment must be kept out of sight and secured. Only leave in a locked car boot if there are no better alternative options.
- Travelling abroad – it is not envisaged that there will be a regular requirement to take Council provided mobile devices abroad. If there is a specific requirement, the councillor should seek advice from the Democratic Services and Elections Manager.

## Privacy

- It is the policy of the Council that email and internet use will be monitored.
- Inappropriate use or content will be brought to the attention of the Monitoring Officer and may result in an investigation. Inappropriate use includes defamatory comments, swearing and abusive behaviour.
- All emails sent and received from a council email address are potentially disclosable to the public and press, for example, through information requests to the Council under the Data Protection Legislation (UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## Confidentiality

- Councillors may be able to access confidential Council information using the ICT equipment. Councillors are responsible for ensuring the continuing security of any such confidential information that they receive, including the security of any storage of such information on the computer or tablet.
- Councillors must ensure that no one else can view any personal details on the screen.

## Return and Recovery of Equipment

- All ICT equipment and software assigned remains the property of the Council. The Council reserves the right to require the Councillor to return the ICT equipment at any time.
- If any councillor, to whom equipment has been supplied, ceases to hold office, for whatever reason, they will be required to return the equipment to Democratic Services within two weeks of ceasing office.



## **IT Security Policy**

It is necessary that councillors comply with and have a working understanding of the Council's IT Security Policy and supporting guidance notes, which apply to all ICT equipment and systems. Below is an overview of the key points within the Policy.

### **Email and Internet Acceptable Usage Guidance**

The Council's email and Internet facilities are intended for Council business use only.

Use of email and Internet access introduces security threats such as malicious code attached e.g. viruses, unsolicited or undesirable email, fraudulent attempts to acquire sensitive information, such as passwords and credit card details.

Non Council emails for example, Hotmail, must not be used to conduct or support official City of Lincoln Council business.

No forwarding of emails from council email addresses to personal email addresses will be permitted, either automatic or manual forwarding by officers or councillors.

Under no circumstances should councillors use email and Internet facilities for:

- i) illegal or malicious use, including downloading or transmitting copyright material; or
- ii) accessing, sorting or transferring illegal, pornographic or obscene material.

Access to certain categories of website will be restricted for example for adult entertainment, drugs and alcohol or gambling (if access to a blocked site is required this can be overridden by contacting the IT helpdesk), subject to the site being used for appropriate council business.

All councillors are responsible for complying with the Council's Email and Internet Acceptable Use Guidance.

### **Remote Working Policy**

Business critical data should be stored on a Council file and print server wherever possible and not held on the portable computer device.

No family members may use the IT equipment. The IT equipment is supplied for the sole use of staff or councillors.

The user must ensure that reasonable care is taken of the IT equipment supplied. Where any fault in the equipment has been caused by the user, in breach of the above paragraphs, City of Lincoln Council may recover the costs of repair.

Any user who chooses to undertake work at home or remotely in relation to their official duties using their own IT equipment must understand that they are not permitted to hold any database or carry out any processing of information relating to the Council, its employees, or customers. **Under no circumstances** should Council information be emailed to a private non-Council email address. For further information, please refer to the Email Mandatory Guidance.

It is possible for staff and councillors to use their own computer for remote access into the Council's system. The computer must be up to date with a current and update antivirus product installed and active.

## **Information Protection**

An incident is an event that could cause damage to the Council's reputation, service delivery or even an individual. This could be a lost laptop or paper case file, a virus on the network or a damaged piece of hardware.

Councillors should report any incidents or suspected incidents immediately by contacting the IT Section.

A personal data breach means a breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data transmitted, stored or otherwise processed.

Personal data is information related to an identified or identifiable natural person who can be identified directly or indirectly by reference to an identifier such as a name.

Councillors should report any personal data breaches immediately to the Data Protection Officer or the Legal Services Manager or if both unavailable any member of the Legal Services team.

Councillors need to keep evidence of security breaches or system incidents; in case these are required later. In relation to personal data breaches Councillors will be required to complete an online data breach form if they have access to the Council's Hub (SharePoint) if not this will be completed on their behalf. This e-form is completed to record the incident and not to report it. As stated above any such breaches should be reported immediately by contacting the above-named officers.

## **Removable Media**

It is the Council's policy to prohibit the use of all removable media devices. Removable media devices are electronic items usually used for storing or transporting data, for example a computer disk (CD or DVD), USB memory stick, MP3 player, external hard drive or a camera memory card. The use of removable media devices will only be approved if there is a valid business case for its use.

All data stored on removable media must be encrypted where possible.

Any removable media device that has not been supplied by the IT Section must not be used. All ICT equipment supplied will by default have removable media facilities disabled unless there is a valid business case.

## **Software**

Councillors must not install or configure any software on the Council's ICT equipment. If a councillor requires any software for their council work, they must consult the IT Helpdesk.

All standard software installed on Council issued ICT equipment is correctly licensed and the Council will hold the details and records. These licences apply to a single copy of the software on one machine. The software must not be copied to any other machine.

No data should be entered onto internet-based services without prior approval by the ICT team.

## **Updates and maintenance**

Periodic updates should be applied to any equipment supplied. Further guidance can be provided by the ICT team.

## **Responsibilities for Passwords**

Councillors must follow the Council's Password Guidance in the selection and use of passwords.

It is the responsibility of all employees/users of the Council's IT systems to maintain password security. Ensure no passwords are issued to unauthorised personnel. Passwords should not be divulged for any purpose.

## **Reporting of and Managing IT Security Incidents**

Incidents affecting IT security must be reported to the ICT Helpdesk as soon as possible.

As stated above, any personal data breaches must be reported immediately to the Data Protection Officer or the Legal Services Manager or if both unavailable a member of the Legal Services team.

Further information may be found on the Councils Intranet - [Data Protection - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#) .

**ICT Helpdesk**

lThelpdesk@lincoln.gov.uk, 01522 87(3327)

**Data Protection Officer**

[dpo@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:dpo@lincoln.gov.uk)

01522 881188



## COUNCILLOR AGREEMENT

I, Councillor....., have read and understood  
the Councillor ICT Policy as set out above and hereby agree to comply with the terms  
of the policy.

Signed:	
Date:	
In the presence of:	<i>(Officer of City of Lincoln Council)</i>
Signed:	

This page is intentionally blank.

# Social Media Policy

## Document Control

<b>Organisation</b>	City of Lincoln Council
<b>Title</b>	Social media policy
<b>Author – name and title</b>	Steven Welsby – Communications Manager
<b>Owner – name and title</b>	Steven Welsby – Communications Manager
<b>Date</b>	04/08/2022
<b>Approval date</b> (by Council/ Executive)	22/04/2023
<b>Filename</b>	
<b>Version</b> (V0.1 is draft and then to V.02 V1.0 is the final version)	V1.0
<b>Next Review Date</b>	

## Document Amendment History

Revision	Originator of change	Date of change	Change description
1	SMW	12/02/20	Incorporate comments from committee
2	SMW	19/10/20	Strengthening of personal safety messaging
3	SMW	23/11/21	Changes based on E&E feedback
4	SMW	Ongoing	Addition of new social media accounts/channels



**In this document:**

**Section one: Information for all - communications governance**

**Section two: Information specific to councillors**

**Section three: Information specific to all staff**

## **Section one: Information for all - communications governance.**

### **Contents:**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Policy statements**
- 3. Principles**
- 4. Scope**
- 5. Communications**
- 6. Accounts**
- 7. One account**
- 8. Code of local authority publicity**
- 9. Authority**
- 10. To block or not to block**
- 11. Photography and video**
- 12. How the council will ensure the best use of its social media**
- 13. Emergency planning and business continuity**
- 14. Use of social media in the recruitment process**
- 15. Working with the communications team**

## **1. Introduction**

Social media continues to grow at a rapid pace and has changed the way individuals and organisations communicate.

It is a broad-brush term used for online tools, websites and interactive media that enable users to interact with each other by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of social media channels and digital platforms now available which offer great opportunities to communicate council messages and enable two way communications with residents, visitors and businesses.

Corporate websites are often no longer the automatic first port of call when people wish to ask a question. This means we have to think beyond traditional forms of communicating online to meet the needs of residents and stakeholders.

Done well, social media can help our customers get the information they need quickly which, in turn, can reduce the need for customers to call us or visit us, which can benefit us both. Social media is seen as quick, easy and accessible – and can be used on the move, 24 hours a day in a matter of seconds.

Social media can enable us to work more effectively by delivering important and timely messages, seek opinions, correct misconceptions and by sharing messages across partnerships.

Messaging can be done instantly and can be far-reaching, which can bring many benefits but also a number of risks. Accounts can take a significant time to create and manage in an effective manner and should not be undertaken lightly.

Social media is also not a silver bullet, nor a quick win to deliver service objectives or priorities.

And when social media goes wrong it can go wrong spectacularly and cause significant damage to the organisation, the brand and our reputation.

This policy lays out how City of Lincoln Council will use social media, responsibility for channels, procedures and risk management.

In addition, in sections two and three, it helps guide the use of social media by both councillors and staff.

## **2. Policy statements**

City of Lincoln Council will, corporately, use social media channels only where it is relevant, as part of multimedia promotional and communications activities, where we can offer professional staffing and monitoring and where it meets council communications priorities. Social media is an integral part of the communications tool kit.

City of Lincoln Council-related social media channels and activities are only permitted with the specific agreement of the communications team and if they comply with the above criteria. To ensure there is no audience split there should, in the main, be only one corporate feed on each channel.

Personal accounts and postings by staff and councillors should comply with the relevant codes of conduct and the council's disciplinary policy. This consideration is even more important if they are identifiable as members of council staff or councillors, whether on the same digital channel, an alternative or offline.

### 3. Principles

Accounts should follow these six guiding principles:

- **Be respectful** – set the tone for online conversations by being polite, open and respectful. Use familiar language, be cordial, honest and professional at all times.
- **Be credible and consistent** – be accurate, fair, thorough and transparent. Encourage constructive criticism and deliberation. Make sure that what you say online is consistent with your other communications.
- **Be honest about who you are** – it's important that any accounts or profiles that you set up are clearly and easily identifiable. Be clear about your own personal role.
- **Be responsive** – make an effort to share what you know. Offer insights where appropriate and put people in touch with someone who can help if you cannot. Respond to questions and comments in a timely manner.
- **Be concise** – people shouldn't have to search for the main message you are sharing. Put it front and centre. Use plain English and keep sentences short, snappy and relevant.
- **Think twice** – think carefully about all your social media posts. Once published it will be too late to change your mind. Follow these rules and seek further guidance if you need it.

### 4. Scope

This policy applies to City of Lincoln Council as a corporate body with guidance for councillors and staff also included.

### 5. Communications

Social media is a communications and engagement tool. After many years of using social media, the communications team is best placed to advise on what can work and what doesn't, in the same way as any other communications medium.

Staff wouldn't speak to the media without the advice and consent of the communications team, however the reach and potential damage from a misstep with social media can be far more wide-ranging.

Social media is also now a valid source of news for traditional media outlets, which increases the potential reach of any posts we issue and, in turn, placing us into the media arena where many staff are not equipped or skilled.

The communications team is uniquely placed to not only bring the expertise required to decide whether social media is a suitable medium but also to manage channels to ensure good use, two way communication and to protect the council's reputation.

## **6. Accounts**

The council currently has the following accounts managed and run corporately by the communications team.

These are all monitored during office hours and, where appropriate (for example, during Lincoln Christmas Market or when a particular story is 'breaking') during evenings and weekends.

Councillors and members of staff may wish to 'follow' or 'like' these accounts so that they can keep up-to-date with council business and comment or share on their own accounts where appropriate.

The council is responsible not only for the content of its own posts but also for the comments underneath. These will be monitored as per above (office hours) and, if required, handled as highlighted throughout this policy.

### **Twitter**

- @lincolncouncil – our corporate account
- @lincolnel – our Lincoln Christmas Market account
- @BeLincolnUK – Lincoln Towns Deal account

### **Facebook**

- [www.facebook.com/TheCOLC](http://www.facebook.com/TheCOLC) - our corporate account
- [www.facebook.com/LincolnChristmas](http://www.facebook.com/LincolnChristmas) - our Lincoln Christmas Market account
- [www.facebook.com/BeLincolnUK](http://www.facebook.com/BeLincolnUK) - Lincoln Towns Deal account

### **Instagram**

- @lincolncouncil – our corporate account
- @theLincolnChristmasMarket – our Lincoln Christmas Market account

## **LinkedIn**

- City of Lincoln Council
- BeLincolnUK

## **YouTube**

- City of Lincoln Council

**The following accounts are run by individual officers or teams**

## **Twitter**

- @Lincoln\_CC\_BC – our Building Control account

## **Facebook**

- [www.facebook.com/City-Of-Lincoln-Building-Control](https://www.facebook.com/City-Of-Lincoln-Building-Control) - our Building Control account
- [www.facebook.com/TheCOLCcareers](https://www.facebook.com/TheCOLCcareers) - the HR team's account for recruitment
- [www.facebook.com/HartsholmeCP](https://www.facebook.com/HartsholmeCP) - the account for Hartsholme Country Park
- [www.facebook.com/City-Of-Lincoln-Council-Resident-Involvement](https://www.facebook.com/City-Of-Lincoln-Council-Resident-Involvement) - resident involvement

## **Facebook groups**

- [www.facebook.com/groups/lincolnsocialresponsibility](https://www.facebook.com/groups/lincolnsocialresponsibility)

**In addition**, the following accounts have been set up in 2022 for the Mayor of Lincoln role. The accounts are run in partnership with the council's Civic Team and the Mayor, with input from the Communications Team as appropriate:

The accounts held are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok and use the same user name of: **LincolnMayorUK**

## **7. One account**

Latest expert advice from the Local Government Information Unit is that councils should have one corporate account on each major social media platform.

With this in mind, we run the aforementioned accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. However, the communications team also horizon scans and monitors trends in social media to ensure any upcoming apps and tools are considered as possible ways to engage with residents and stakeholders.

## 8. Code of local authority publicity

Social media communication by local authorities falls under the code of local authority publicity which, among other things, lays out regulations around how local authorities are allowed to communicate.

It also includes restrictions on local authority publicity in the run up to elections – commonly known as purdah or pre-election period – and all social media channels identifiable as related to the council must adhere to the code at all times.

Councillor and staff accounts are not bound by the same code but personal accounts and postings should comply with the relevant codes of conduct and the council's disciplinary policy.

## 9. Authority

As the city council, we are considered by residents and the media as an 'authority' and that when we post we have the facts correct and can legally post what we do. This means the council may be liable if information is posted from one of its accounts which does not comply with the legal framework. Therefore postings by those who are not aware of legal ramifications of public information are particularly risky.

## 10. To block or not to block

On most social media channels there are options to mute or block people, or to hide or delete comments where appropriate.

When dealing with inappropriate or aggressive comments on social media, the following approaches will be taken by the city council (approach will depend on what a resident has posted and decisions will be made on a case by case basis by the communications team).

Councillors and staff should consider taking the same approach with their own accounts, to avoid becoming embroiled in matters which could reflect on them. If the matter being discussed relates to City of Lincoln Council, it would be appropriate to make the council's communications team aware of the matter.

### Aggression / rudeness / low level abuse

- Answer the comment with a factual and professional response and request that the inappropriate behaviour ceases
- If the aggression and rudeness continues, ignore but monitor (see 'repeated low level abuse' actions below)

Libel or reputationally damaging comments or images about named council officers (an issue which should always be referred on to the city council's legal services department)

- Instant blocking with no warning and report to the socialmedia platform's owners

#### High level abuse / repeated low level abuse / racism or equalities

- Delete comment with no warning
- Block with no warning
- Make the council's Democratic Services team aware (who may then also involve the council's Communications and Legal teams, if appropriate)
- Report to social media platform's owners

## **11. Photography and video**

As with other communication mediums, use of good photography and video are an essential part of social media communications.

Unfortunately, as with print media, poor or inappropriate imagery can have a negative impact on the council's reputation or the reputation of individual members or staff.

The council will only use professional, stock or well-taken appropriate images for social media feeds – the same as any other communications activity – and only use professional or well-taken appropriate video (speak to communications, who can assist with this).

On council or councillors accounts, any staff or residents in photographs or video will be made fully aware that it is, or could be, used on social media and must give permission before anything is posted.

No image or video should be posted without specific verbal consent from all parties if the image was taken in a private space. Any photo or video posted without the permission of all parties will be required to be removed.

Written consent is required by a parent or guardian for any person under the age of 16 before photography or video can be published.

Any imagery, be it video or photo, taken in a public place, i.e. a general image of the high street, where members of the public are walking, does not need permission. However, we would advise you respect others in this situation and seek consent *where possible*.

GDPR regulations and copyright laws apply.

## **12. How the council will ensure the best use of its social media**

To ensure the best use of the social media, the council **will**:

- have one main corporate channel for each platform
- talk to residents and customers through its channels



- be transparent and honest in social interactions
- have a personality and be human – we will keep dry, ‘corporate speak’ to a minimum to enable engagement
- where appropriate, answer questions quickly and honestly
- be responsible
- share appropriate and helpful content from other organisations where appropriate
- monitor accounts during usual working hours as a minimum
- use hashtags appropriately and strategically
- ask questions and seek feedback
- consider social media accounts as customer service channels
- listen to responses
- adhere to HR policies
- adhere to the code of local government publicity
- work across service areas to provide an excellent customer experience
- always have more than one person responsible for an account
- only create accounts because we should, not because we can
- investigate any issues which arise outside of traditional office hours
- ensure information is accurate, and double check prior to posting, with any mistakes rectified in a timely manner
- evaluate the outcome of posts, seeking detail on interactions and reach

The council **will not**:

- just broadcast or talk at people – social media is social and two way communication is required
- continue running accounts that deliver poor performance – for example if a certain platform were to lose its popularity and post interactions became non-existent
- assume social media is ‘free;’ social media is time consuming and officer time costs the organisation
- assume social media is ‘easy’ or will look after itself; social media requires an investment of time, enthusiasm and energy
- leave accounts unattended for more than a week
- be inappropriate in any way
- post content which would intentionally embarrass the council, councillors or members of staff
- post content which is of a purely internal matter unless expressly requested to do so
- build accounts and hope people will come – they won’t
- make derogatory comments about any person or the council as a whole

### **13. Emergency planning and business continuity**

Social media will be the initial main form of communication with residents in case of a civil emergency or major incident in the city.

This will be through the main corporate accounts and not through any other council or personal account.

Social media will form a key part of the communications plan in case of emergencies.

#### **14. Use of social media in the recruitment process**

The HR departments will use it's Facebook page to advertise vacancies and these will be shared onto the council's corporate account by the communications team.

However, unless it is in relation to finding candidates (for example, if an individual has put their details on social media websites for the purpose of attracting prospective employers), the HR department and managers will not, either themselves or through a third party, conduct searches on applicants on social media.

This is because conducting these searches during the selection process might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics (for example, sexual orientation or religious beliefs) played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with the organisation's equal opportunities policy.

#### **15. Working with the communications team**

Anyone who wishes to undertake work and engagement online through social media should contact the communications team for assistance and advice.

The communications team will consider all requests and advise on the most appropriate action.

The communications team can be contacted through [communications@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:communications@lincoln.gov.uk) or by calling 01522 873318.

## Section two – councillor specific information

Social media can be a useful tool for councillors. It can help you gain feedback on proposals and communicate information about your activities.

Social media is always on, so it is advised that you consider setting personal limits and establishing your own routine, and remember that you are subject to the council's code of conduct when using social media.

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and many more have all become everyday communications tools for councillors and the people they represent. The potential is huge and social media allows you to be innovative and responsive as well as providing links to useful sources of information or sign-posting to other organisations.

The following is some advice and guidance which can be used to guide your use of social media while acting in your official capacity.

### 1. Councillor use of social media

- In any personal online biography, it should be made clear that the views are those of the councillor in question and not necessarily the view of the council.
- Councillors should look to set out a response policy, such as "I welcome questions via email" and an engagement policy, such as "abusive content will be removed."
- For personal safety, as well as identity security, you should give serious consideration to whether or not you share personal information, images of friends and / or family.
- It is also advisable not to include details such as personal phone number, home address, details of family members and vehicle details.
- You are personally responsible for the content you publish. It is important that you are confident of the nature of the information you publish.
- If you comment about your role as councillor online you will be deemed as acting in your official capacity and any conduct will fall within the members' code of conduct.
- Social media must not be used in a way that might lead to a complaint that you have breached the city council's Code of Conduct for Councillors.
- It is advisable that councillors have separate social media profiles for their role as a city councillor and for their private life.
- Councillors are responsible for any content they publish on any form of social media. Publishing or allowing to be published (in the form of a comment) an untrue statement about a person which is damaging to their reputation may incur a libel action for which they would be personally liable; no indemnity from the council would be available.
- Councillors must not use the city council's logo, or any other council related material on a personal account or website, nor should they refer to themselves as a councillor.
- Social media sites are in the public domain, subject to privacy settings, so it is important councillors ensure they are confident of the nature of the information

they publish. Once published, content is almost impossible to control and may be manipulated without consent, used in different contexts, or further distributed.

- Do not provide references for individuals on social or professional networking sites as this will create a legal liability.
- Councillors should look to make use of privacy settings if they don't want their social media to be accessed by the press or public. We encourage councillors to read the terms of service of any social media site accessed and make sure they understand the confidentiality/privacy settings.
- Councillors should not disclose any other persons' personal details such as home addresses and telephone numbers on social media. Any personal or sensitive information should be handled in line with the city council's Data Protection policies. Safeguarding issues are paramount because social media sites are often misused by offenders. Safeguarding is everyone's business – if councillors have any concerns about other site users, they have a responsibility to report these.
- Councillors should not publish or report on meetings which are private or internal (where no members of the public are present or it is of a confidential nature) or exempt reports (which contain confidential information or matters which are exempt under the provision of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985).
- Copyright laws apply online. Placing images or text from a copyrighted source (e.g. extracts from publications or photos) without permission is likely to breach copyright. Councillors should avoid publishing anything they are unsure about or seek permission from the copyright holder in advance.
- Councillors should be aware of their own safety when placing information on the internet and should not publish information which could leave them vulnerable.
- Do not, in your role as councillor, use social media to promote personal financial interests.
- Be aware that the higher your profile as an elected member, the more likely it is that you will be seen as acting in your official capacity when commenting on social media.
- If you are a dual-hatter (i.e. a councillor at city council and county council), be aware that this policy is for the city council only and may differ from the policy in place at other councils. Please be mindful when commenting on either council's projects, as this could impact on your ability to participate in a debate and/or vote on such matters. It is suggested that you seek advice from officers before commenting.
- Do tolerate disagreement - some comments may not align with your own. Accept this and do not get bogged down with 'difficult' users.
- Remember social media isn't always a reflection of real life and that most people on social media are nothing like that in real life!

## Section three: Information specific to all staff

1. Employee wellbeing
2. Personal accounts
3. Personal use of social media at work
4. Excessive use of social media at work
5. Disciplinary action over social media use
6. Yammer

### 1. Employee wellbeing

People on social media are not always nice.

The council has received abuse on social media with council staff (in general), individuals and councillors being insulted.

Insults are used, tone can be aggressive and accusations are frequent. People behave, and verbalise, online and on social media, in a way they would not necessarily do in person or on the phone.

Involvement in social media with responses like this can be demoralising, frustrating and upsetting.

The council understands the toll this can take on staff, and managers of staff regularly using social media for work purposes should ensure there are regular opportunities for staff to undertake other work offline.

Managers should also ensure that staff are appropriately trained to manage accounts professionally despite any abuse or negative feedback received, and support is in place during difficult periods as there would be if the abuse was verbal, on the phone or face-to-face. Consideration should also be given as to whether any such incident requires reporting under the Corporate Health & Safety Unacceptable Behaviour Policy.

To mitigate risks to staff, no one single staff member should be responsible for any account. There should always be another member of the team who has access to and editorial rights over the channels used. This also ensures business continuity.

### 2. Personal accounts

Staff are welcome and encouraged to have personal accounts on social media and there are lots of positive reasons to do so, including:

- Following the council – as an employee you can find out more about what the council is up to across all departments as well as events and activities you may have missed on internal channels.

- Hearing about things first – social media is often now where the news breaks first including, sometimes, council news.
- Joining in with the buzz – local activities can create a real buzz online, whether about the council or not and knowing our local communities and what they are talking about online is never a bad thing.
- You don't have to speak – you don't have to post your views on anything or everything, you can just listen to others by following them and reading what they have to say.
- We can help set you up – if the idea of a tweet or following someone is a giant step into the unknown, the communications team is happy to offer advice.
- You don't have to say you work for the council on your feed, and it is recommended that you don't to avoid any negative impacts – it is up to you.

#### Top tips for personal accounts:

- Use your common sense - don't write anything you wouldn't say to your friends or post pictures you wouldn't want your friends and family to see.
- Consider your privacy settings carefully so as to avoid any negative impacts on you from the wider general public.
- Don't be rude, abusive, bullying or anything else which could bring the council, or you personally into disrepute, even if heavily provoked as this could easily fall into a conduct issue.
- If commenting on a council issue, keep it factual, positive and non-personal.
- Block or unfollow people who are rude, abusive, bullying or otherwise insulting.
- Don't use the council's logo or an image including the council's logo as a profile image – you will look like an official council spokesperson and could get quoted by the press. Please be aware that certain platforms (LinkedIn, for example) add logos automatically and, if this platform is used, incorporating the logo cannot be avoided.
- Do follow the council and retweet or repost anything you find interesting or is good news – even if you only do that for tweets related to your team it helps spread the word of all our successes.
- Don't engage the trolls – trolls are exactly what they sound like and lurk on social media ready to leap on things people say. It is always best to ignore them.
- Choose your 'friends' carefully – if you are in a sensitive position as an employee or in a politically restricted post, best not to follow or post on political issues, especially local ones (this doesn't apply to councillors).
- Have regard to the member code of conduct and the member / officer code as detailed in the constitution.
- Remember social media isn't always a reflection of real life and that most people on social media are nothing like that in real life!
- Remember and be aware of the LGA's code of publicity, especially during pre-election period – this can be found on the Hub and on government websites.
- Please consider the implications of stating who your employer is on your social media profile as doing could potentially result in abuse and comments you make may be deemed to be coming direct from the council itself.
- Do not use your own social media account(s) for any council business at all. Your personal life must be kept separate from your work. This is for your own safety and

wellbeing. You must comply with the Council's Regulatory of Investigatory Powers Act Policy and the Guidance on Using Social Media which can be found on Netconsent.

- This sets out when it might be appropriate to use the council's social media accounts to investigate potential legal proceedings, and how to do it. If you have any questions about this, please contact the legal services or communications team.
- Any approach relating to the council or council work on personal social media accounts should be referred to the communications team who can advise on appropriateness of any response.

### **3. Personal use of social media at work**

Employees are allowed to access social media from the organisation's computers or devices at certain times, if the sites are enabled. Employees who are not responsible for a council social media account must limit their use of social media to their official rest breaks such as their lunch break.

The organisation understands that employees may also wish to use their own computers or devices to access social media while they are at work. Again employees must limit their use of social media on their own equipment to their official rest breaks.

### **4. Excessive use of social media at work**

Employees should not spend an excessive amount of time while at work using social media.

They should ensure that use of social media does not interfere with their other duties. This is likely to have a detrimental effect on employees' productivity.

### **5. Disciplinary action over social media use**

All employees are required to adhere to the social media policy.

Employees should note that any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

Serious breaches of this policy, for example incidents of bullying of colleagues or social media activity causing serious damage to the council, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal.

### **6. Yammer**

As of September 2022, the city council's staff will be able to access Yammer, a social networking tool to openly connect and engage with colleagues across the organisation.

Yammer is being introduced to provide a collaborative environment to help staff connect with colleagues and bring together directorates virtually to share meaningful information, general and common interests using work-based social media.

Yammer will be used to deliver news, announcements and share general information directly to employees. The Hub (the city council's intranet) will be utilised for corporate/business information only.

It will enable staff to get answers to questions in Yammer groups without knowing exactly whom to ask. It will ensure managers and employees celebrate successes and recognise accomplishments in a Facebook-like environment.

Staff will be able to conduct polls and surveys to obtain feedback from colleagues quickly and respond where necessary.

Staff use of Yammer will also be governed by this social media policy, along with associated IT policies.



## City of Lincoln Council

### Yammer Policy

#### What is Yammer?

**Yammer is a social networking tool to openly connect and engage with colleagues across our organisation.**

*Our goal is to provide a collaborative environment to connect with colleagues and bring together our directorates virtually in different working locations to share meaningful information, general and common interests using work based social media*

We aim to:

- Use Yammer to deliver news, announcements and share general information directly to employees. The Hub (Council's intranet) will be utilised for 'official' corporate/business information only
- Enable staff to get answers to questions by querying Yammer groups without knowing exactly whom to ask.
- Ensure Managers and employees celebrate successes and recognise accomplishments in a Facebook-like environment.
- Conduct polls and surveys to obtain feedback from staff quickly and respond where necessary.
- Enable staff to create their own social communities for common interests. E.g. sport groups, Health groups etc

In turn, we expect you to enjoy the benefits of Yammer in a hybrid working environment whilst adhering to the policy guidance detailed in this document. Your activity in this network is governed by the Council's Social Media Policy and associated IT policies. You will be asked to agree to these policies via Netconsent once a year and the following requirements should be understood.

#### **Basic Guidelines:**

These guidelines are not meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather an outline of things to consider when being active in the Yammer community.

- **Accountability:** Take responsibility for your postings, clearly differentiating opinions from fact. By posting content, you agree that you are solely responsible for the content you create. Neither the content you post, nor the links to other web sites, are screened, approved, reviewed or endorsed by City of Lincoln Council. **Do not post any confidential information.**

- **Purpose:** Yammer is not for discussions regarding specific work projects or customers/partners/suppliers/members of the public and is only provided for staff social discussions such as the organisation of social events, announcements and general work tips.
- **Accuracy and Transparency:** The text and other material posted are the opinion of the specific author and are not statements of advice or information of City of Lincoln Council. Use your real name and a real photograph of you in your profile so it's easier to know who you are.
- **Common Courtesy:** Don't do anything that will reflect negatively on you or your colleagues.
- **Policy:** By joining the Yammer network, you are agreeing to abide by this policy for the acceptable use of information technology. Any violation of the policy may result in suspension of network access or possible disciplinary action
- **Be Social:** Try to engage the network in productive dialogue and work to follow the City of Lincoln Council social media guidelines found [here](#)
- **Everything in Yammer stays in Yammer!** (No public posts or Tweets, and so on)

### Using Appropriate Language and Tone

- Be tolerant of others' opinions, avoid antagonising anyone, and do not react if provoked. Remember, you are a member of Yammer community, and so represent not only your Directorate but also the Council itself.
- Be respectful to other members. It is acceptable to disagree, but please do so in a respectful, non-discriminatory manner.

### Choosing An Audience

When choosing an audience be mindful of the following:

- Who will benefit most from my post?
- If I am asking a question, where am I most likely to receive an appropriate answer?
- Does my post contain too many words, or too few?
- Is my post meaningful in any way?
- How might the language use and tone of voice in my post be perceived?

These are only a few guidelines of questions you should ask yourself before making a post. There may be times when posting an article to the entire organisation may be appropriate, and other instances where your post would be best seen by only certain groups and/or people. *Please think before you post.*

## Acceptable Files for Upload

Uploading files to Yammer allows you to collaborate on documents and utilise material to support your conversations and interactions. When uploading files be sure to keep in my mind the following:

- Files should be relevant to the group and/or current topic.
- As always, files should be appropriate for professional use.

## Creating A Group

Yammer groups are a powerful resource and are beneficial when you want to connect with other like-minded members of the Council for a productive purpose. Consider these questions before creating a group in Yammer:

- Is there an established group that may fit my current needs?
- Will this group be beneficial to the development and engagement of the campus community?
- Should the group be private or public?
- What is the main purpose for the creation the group?

These simple questions will help to keep the Yammer community organised and free of duplication and unnecessary groups, thereby creating an environment for open communication and valuable dialogue.

All communities should have two Admins at a minimum.

*Not sure If It's okay to post? Send Yammer Admins an inquiry and we will help you decide.*

## Yammer privacy notice

The City of Lincoln Council (the council) is what is known as a 'data controller' of the information you provide, and we are registered with the Information Commissioner's Officer. We take your privacy seriously and this notice informs you of how we use your personal information in Yammer.

Yammer is an enterprise social networking service which we are using for social communications within the council. For further information see [What is Yammer? \(microsoft.com\)](https://www.microsoft.com/yammer)

Use of Yammer is subject to the council's Yammer Acceptable Usage guidance.

## How we will use your information

Yammer has been introduced to increase social engagement across the council, create a one council environment and ease the isolation of working remotely.

To create an account, you will be asked to enter your name and work email address.

Yammer will be monitored for any abusive language used by way of 'key word' detection. This will be reported to Communications in the first instance before reporting to relevant Line Managers and Human Resources. In addition, Office 365 Administrators within the Council have access to private content posted however, this will only be accessed where there is a legal reason to do so.

We are collecting and using your information which is necessary for a legitimate business interest (social welfare of staff) and for the performance of your employment contract in relation to compliance with the Yammer Acceptable Usage Guidance.

When an Office 365 Administrator deletes your account when you leave the Council you will be deactivated in Yammer. After 30 days, your data is deleted from Office 365 and after 90 days, you are permanently removed from Yammer. It is important to highlight that although your account is deleted, Yammer messages will remain as showing as posted from you.

### **Who may we share your information with?**

Your information may be accessed by our staff who need to use it in relation to Acceptable Usage and your contract if employment. Your information will be shared with the following third-party organisation, Yammer, which is hosted on the Office 365 cloud service hosted in the EU.

### **Third Party Information**

If you are uploading anyone else's details, please make sure that you have explained to them that you have given their information to us. For example, if you are uploading a photo or video that identifies an individual you must make sure you have their consent to share, and they must be informed how they can withdraw consent at any time.

### **Your rights**

For information on how to raise a complaint if you are unhappy with the way we have processed your data or the rights you have over your personal data, please see our privacy notice on our website at [www.lincoln.gov.uk/privacy-policy](http://www.lincoln.gov.uk/privacy-policy) or if you would like a hard copy of this information, please contact us using the data protection officer contact details provided above.

## Appendix 1

### Yammer Acceptable Usage Guidance

- Everything in Yammer stays in Yammer (no public posts on social media, etc.)
- do not post confidential information into any community.
- do not post personal data of customers/, commercially sensitive or political statements relating to Council business.
- Yammer is not for discussions regarding specific work projects or customers/partners/suppliers/members of the public and is only provided for staff social discussions such as the organisation of social events, announcements and general work tips.
- we all have a responsibility to protect council data, so if you do see any personal or commercially/politically sensitive information posted or you think someone has received something they shouldn't have, contact your line manager and email Yammer admins and they will delete any such information
- be polite and respectful to other members. It is acceptable to disagree, but please do so in a respectful and non-discriminatory manner. What's said here is visible to your employer, line manager, colleagues and members. Please keep it professional at all times.
- if you are posting a photo/video you must ensure you have permission from the individuals included in the image/video before doing so.
- should you be informed that a party no longer wishes their photo to be displayed or you yourself wish a photo to be removed please contact the appropriate group admins.
- you are responsible for the material you post to Yammer and if you breach the Acceptable Usage Guidance this may result in disciplinary action being taken against you.
- where there is a legal reason to do so, please be aware admins on Yammer have access to private content posted.
- Yammer will be monitored for any abusive language used by way of 'key word' detection. This will be reported to Communication Team in the first instance who will then report into line managers and HR.
- we keep your information safe. Yammer is hosted on the Office365 cloud service and is securely held by Microsoft. Please note that with the cloud you cannot guarantee complete deletion.
- information posted on Yammer is attributed to the individual and does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of City of Lincoln Council. Any official Council announcements should be made through standard communication channels and not linked back to content stored on Yammer.
- Information posted on Yammer will be subject to Freedom of Information Act, Environmental Information Regulations & General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 – this means that members of the public can ask for information held about Council activities (FOI(S)/EI(S)/R) or if an individual requests their own information under Data Protection. Members of staff can also make these requests.

### Communities

- Only internal communities will be permitted

- if you want to create a community, name it carefully – there's lots of other communities out there.
- only create a community if you really need it
- City of Lincoln Council withholds the right to remove any communities it deems unsuitable or offensive (or no longer in use)

**Inappropriate posts should be directed to Yammer Admins in the first instance.**

Please visit [Microsoft's support page for Yammer](#) for further help and learning.



**Chief Executive & Town Clerk**  
**Angela Andrews CPFA**  
City Hall, Beaumont Fee  
Lincoln. LN1 1DB  
Telephone: (01522) 881188  
Website: **[www.lincoln.gov.uk](http://www.lincoln.gov.uk)**  
Minicom: (01522) 873693 - Reception

## **TO ALL NEWLY ELECTED COUNCILLORS**

**Sally Brooks**  
is dealing with this matter  
Direct Line: **(01522) 873765**  
E-Mail: [sally.brooks@lincoln.gov.uk](mailto:sally.brooks@lincoln.gov.uk)

Our Ref: SB/DPO  
Date: 2 May 2024

Dear Councillor,

### **Data Protection Responsibilities**

Further to the information provided to you as part of the 'Councillor Induction Pack', please be aware that you are a 'Controller' when processing constituents' personal data and you must comply with the Data Protection Legislation.

Please also note that since the 1 April 2019 the Data Protection (Charges and Information) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 councillors/elected representatives are exempt from paying the data protection fee, to the Information Commissioner's Office (the UK independent data rights regulator). [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

You may however need to pay the data protection fee if you process personal data for any other reason than for the purposes of being councillor/elected representative excluding for personal, family and household affairs. You are responsible for checking if you need to pay the fee and you can check this on the ICO's website [Registration self-assessment | ICO](#).

Further information will be provided regarding your data protection responsibilities as a councillor/elected representative on induction, along with the requirement for you to complete annual data protection training.

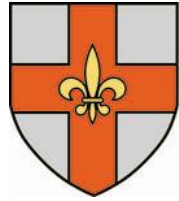
If you have any queries regarding your responsibilities, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Sally Brooks  
Data Protection Officer

This page is intentionally blank.





CITY OF  
*Lincoln*  
COUNCIL

# **City of Lincoln Council Councillor and MP response protocol**

**Reviewed February 2023**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This protocol governs the arrangements for ensuring that officers respond to councillor and MP requests for help on resolving service failures, delays, or the way an existing request has been handled, in a timely manner.
- 1.2 For initial enquiries, standard service requests or reports of a problem, customers should use the usual route for resolution which is either by completing an online service request or “contact us” form or by calling our Customer Service Centre. The Customer Service team are available to help customers across a wide range of service areas. It is only where customers have an ongoing, unresolved issue or a complex problem which requires assistance, that the councillor or MP might wish to intervene.
- 1.3 Formal complaints will continue to be dealt with in accordance with the City of Lincoln Council’s complaints procedure.
- 1.4 The principles underpinning this protocol are that:
  - All officers will do their best at all times to give timely responses to councillors and MP enquiries in accordance with the timescales for response set out below (or the standards appropriate to the service – e.g. Noise complaints can take longer than five days to investigate fully) irrespective of whether they were contacted directly or through the Single Point of Contact (SPOC).
  - Officers are committed to providing high quality, professional responses to issues by giving clear, consistent and accurate information.
- 1.5 Councillors and MPs can assist the process (whether formally or informally) by ensuring that they provide as much data as possible e.g. full and clear information, expectations about timescales for a response, and what level of feedback they require during the resolution period.

## **2. Single Point of Contact (SPOC)**

- 2.1 The Council has designated a named officer to be the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) in each Directorate for receipt of all enquiries and requests for information from councillors and MPs. This officer will ensure that the enquiry will be speedily passed onto the appropriate service manager, with appropriate information about response times, and how feedback is needed.
- 2.2 In the case of unavailability of any of the named people (below), there will be an indication on their Out of Office message of who to contact in their absence. All queries should then be redirected to the appropriate person to avoid delay.

2.3 The SPOC in each directorate are as follows:

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>SPOC</b>	<b>Ext</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
CX	Lara Trickett	3292	Lara.trickett@lincoln.gov.uk
DCE	Deborah Clucas	3475	Deborah.clucas@lincoln.gov.uk
DHI	Danielle Green	3201	Danielle.green@lincoln.gov.uk
MDD	Lauren Smith	3343	Lauren.smith@lincoln.gov.uk
Leadership	Carly Young	3286	Carly.young@lincoln.gov.uk

In order to help councillors or an MP know which SPOC to use, the following table lists the key services that may come up and its corresponding directorate:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CX)	CX Management
	Work Base Learning (Apprentices)
	Internal Audit
	Civic (Guildhall, Civic Events, Mayoral Duties, Twinning)
	Policy Unit (Strategic Council Policy, E&D, Corporate, Performance, Consultations; Data analysis)
	Communications
	Legal Services (including Freedom of Information)
	Democratic and Electoral Services
	Customer Services
	Business Development and IT (on-line access)
	Revenues and Benefits (including Business Rates)
	Financial Services (Invoicing, Debt Collection, Insurance)
	Procurement
	Human Resources (recruitment)
	Property Services
DIRECTORATE OF COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT (DCE)	Public Protection & Anti-Social Behaviour
	Planning Services
	Food & Health Safety (Food Hygiene ratings)
	Private Housing
	Health & Safety
	Sport, Leisure & City Services (Lincoln Market, Play areas, Leisure Centres, Community Centres)
	Environmental Protection
	Crematorium and Cemeteries
	Community service (Waste Collection, Street Cleansing, CCTV, Allotments,
	Parks and Gardens, Fly Tipping, Public Conveniences
	Parking Services
DIRECTORATE OF MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS (DMD)	Growth
	Major Projects
	Sustainable Urban Extensions
	Infrastructure

	Investment and Supporting Developments
	Climate Change
	Lincoln Central Market
	Business Support: Greetwell Place, The Terrace
DIRECTORATE OF HOUSING AND INVESTMENT (DHI)	Investment and Strategy (including Sustainability, Development, Decent Homes, Health and Safety Compliance (Housing))
	Voids and Housing Solutions (Homelessness, Housing Allocations)
	Tenancy Services
	Lincare
	Housing Repairs Service
	Insurance Claims - Right to Buy, Leasehold only
	Neighbourhood Working

### 3. Timescales for Response

- 3.1 Officers will aim to respond to enquiries within five working days. This timescale will depend on the complexity of the individual enquiry and nature of the enquiry and will be prioritised in accordance with the council's priorities and health and safety guidelines.
- 3.2 The SPOC will acknowledge receipt of the email and in doing so provide the Councillor/MP with the name of the officer tasked with responding to the enquiry.
- 3.3 Where a full response cannot be provided within five working days of receipt of the enquiry, the Councillor/MP will be provided with an explanation as to why this is the case and an estimated date by which the Councillor/MP may expect a full response.
- 3.4 Written correspondence and telephone enquiries will be dealt with on the same basis and should be directed to the SPOC.

### 4. Monitoring and Reporting

- 4.1 The SPOC for each directorate will monitor the enquiries and will track the deadlines. If they find that a query has not been responded to by the given deadline, then this will be escalated in the first instance to the appropriate Assistant Director, and if required to the Director.
- 4.2 The SPOC for each directorate will report quarterly to their **DMT** on the number of enquiries received and the response times taken. The level of escalations required will form part of the report to DMT.

### 5. Review

- 5.1 This protocol will be reviewed annually.

## CITY OF LINCOLN COUNCIL

### GUIDANCE TO MEMBERS ON REGISTERING DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS - THE LOCALISM ACT 2011

The sections quoted refer to the notification form issued by the Council. These notes are to be read in conjunction with that form.

**Failure to register Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) within 28 days of your date of election, or any change in your interests, is a criminal offence.**

**These are defined in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012. You are required to declare DPI's relating to yourself and your partner, which for the purposes of Section 30 of the Localism Act 2011, means:**

- (i) **your spouse or civil partner;**
- (ii) **a person with whom you are living as husband or wife; or**
- (iii) **a person with whom you are living as if they are your civil partner.**

**Please clearly distinguish between those interests that are yours and those interests of your partner as defined above.**

- (a) Enter the name of you and/or your partner's **employer** and nature of your **employment, office, your trade, profession or vocation** where carried out for profit or gain.
- (b) Enter the name of any person (other than the relevant authority) who has made any payment or made provision (within the relevant period) of any other financial benefit to you and/or your partner in respect of any **expenses** incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a member or towards your election expenses (*e.g. constituency parties/associations and trade unions*).

Relevant authority means the Council.

- (c) Enter here details of any **contracts** between the **Council** and **yourself and/or your partner** or any firms in which you are a partner, companies of which you are a director or bodies in which you have an interest declared under (g) below. (*The date of the contract and a brief description of the goods, services or works included in the contract will normally be sufficient*).
- (d) Enter here details of any land (within the area of the council to which this registration refers) in which you and/or your partner have a "beneficial interest." **This will include your place of residence if you own it or rent it and it is within the Council's area.** You do not have to declare the value of the land. You should give sufficient information to enable the location of the land to be identified (*e.g. postal address or Ordnance Survey field reference*).
- (e) Enter here details of any **land** (within the area of the Council to which this registration refers) which you and/or your partner have a **licence** to occupy for a month or longer. (*An address or other description sufficient to identify the location should be given*).

- (f) Enter here details of any **land owned by this Council** and which is **rented** or **leased** to any bodies in which you and/or your partner are a partner or director or bodies in which you have an interest declared under (g) below.
- (g) Enter here the names of any "corporate interest" i.e. **any corporate body**:-
- which has a place of business or land within the area of the Council to which this registration refers, and
  - in which you and/or your partner have a "**beneficial interest**" through shares, debentures, debentures stock, loan stock, bonds units of a collective investment scheme and the total nominal value of such securities exceeds £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital of that body. If the share capital of that body is of more than one class the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you and/or your partner have a beneficial interest exceeds one 1% of the total issued share capital of that class.

### **Personal Interests**

**Please note that you must only register a personal interest if it relates to you. You DO NOT have to register any personal interests relating to your partner.**

- (h) Enter here details of all "**outside bodies**" to which you have been appointed by this Council (*e.g Drainage Boards, Brayford Trust*)
- (i) Enter here details of any **public bodies** of which you are a member or in a position of control or management (*(e.g. other local authorities; NHS bodies)*)
- (j) Enter here details of any "**charitable bodies**" of which you are a member or in a position of control or management (*e.g Greenpeace, RSPB, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust*)
- (k) Enter here details of any bodies whose principal purposes include the influence of political opinion. This includes your political party, trade unions and any single issue pressure/lobbying groups.



**City of Lincoln Council  
Members' and Co-opted Members'  
Disclosable Pecuniary  
and Other Interests**

Councillor's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Note** - Throughout this document the "authority or authority's area" refers to the whole of the area covered by the City of Lincoln Council rather than the ward the Member represents.

**Declaration:**

I, [please state name]....., a Member of the City of Lincoln Council, give notice that I have set out my interests below in the appropriate areas, and have put '**NONE**' where I have no such interest in any area.

**I understand and acknowledge the following:-**

1. I must complete, sign and return this notice within 28 days of the Authority's Local Code of Conduct being adopted or within 28 days of my election or appointment to office.  
I understand that I must register my disclosable pecuniary interests and disclosable non-pecuniary interests by providing written notification to the Council's Monitoring Officer of the details required as set out in this form.
2. If my circumstances change I must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to the interests specified above, provide written notification to the Monitoring Officer of that change.  
I understand that I should do this by making the necessary amendments to this form as soon as possible. I understand that in order to do this, I will be required to *amend, initial and mark* e.g. 1\* the changes against the appropriate section then and *sign* and *date* the form on the *last page*.
3. Part 1 of this form contains disclosable pecuniary interests as prescribed by The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012; whereas Part 2 contains *non-pecuniary* interests which the Council has decided is appropriate for me to register.

4. Disclosable pecuniary interests include not only my interests but also the interests of my spouse or civil partner, a person with whom I am living as husband or wife or a person with whom I am living as if they were a civil partner, so far as I am aware of the interests of that person.
5. The Localism Act 2011 created specific criminal offences in relation to the disclosure of pecuniary interests (Part 1 of this form). I understand it is a criminal offence to :-
  - i. fail to register a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) that I am aware of within 28 days of my election or re-election;
  - ii. take part in the debate or vote at any meeting where I have a registered or unregistered DPI;
  - iii. fail to declare at a meeting and/or to take part in the debate or vote, if I am aware I have a DPI which is not yet registered or notified to the Monitoring Officer;
  - iv. if I have declared an unregistered DPI at a meeting, to fail to register that within 28 days of that declaration;
  - v. provide false or misleading information in relation to any registration or to be reckless as to its accuracy;
  - vi. take any steps or further action on a matter in which I have a DPI other than referring it elsewhere;

in each case without reasonable excuse, and I recognise any such failure is a direct contravention of the Localism Act 2011 and a criminal offence; and may be investigated by the police and referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions. I understand that **upon conviction a Member or co-optee may be fined up to a maximum of £5,000.**

6. If I feel I have an interest which, if disclosed on a public register, could lead to myself or a person connected to me being subject to violence or intimidation, then I must disclose this as a sensitive interest to the Monitoring Officer and need not declare it on this form.
7. I must, within 28 days of receiving any gift or hospitality in my capacity as a Member, with an estimated value of at least £50, provide written notification of that interest, including details of the person(s) from whom it was received. I understand that I should do this by completing the 'Registration of gifts and hospitality' form and return it to :-

The Monitoring Officer  
City of Lincoln Council,  
City Hall,  
Beaumont Fee  
Lincoln LN1 1DB

8. I must notify Democratic Services should I change my home address.

**I recognise that I have a legal duty to complete this form and that I must not:**

1. Omit any which information ought to be given in this notice;
2. Provide information that is materially false or misleading;
3. Fail to update this information as my circumstances change.



Full name	
Member's Signature	
Date	
Monitoring Officer's Signature	
Date	

Amendment(s)	<b>Marked 1*</b>	Date
Members Signature		
Monitoring Officer's Signature		
Amendment(s)	<b>Marked 2*</b>	Date
Members Signature		
Monitoring Officer's Signature		
Amendment(s)	<b>Marked 3*</b>	Date
Members Signature		
Monitoring Officer's Signature		
Amendment(s)	<b>Marked 4*</b>	Date
Members Signature		
Monitoring Officer's Signature		

***Please retain one copy for your own records and send the original to Democratic Services***

## 1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Please answer all parts of this form. You must enter information in every box. If you do not have an interest in a particular question please put "None". All of your interests must be properly recorded in the appropriate areas.

Please provide details of :-

Disclosable pecuniary interests	You	Your spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living with as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if they were a civil partner
<p>a) Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation</p> <p>Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.</p>		
<p>b) Sponsorship</p> <p>Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses.</p> <p>This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.</p>		
<p>c) Contracts</p> <p>Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a</p>		

<p>beneficial interest) and the relevant authority—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</li> <li>ii. which has not been fully discharged.</li> </ul>		
<p>d) Land</p> <p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.</p>		
<p>e) Licences</p> <p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.</p>		
<p>f) Corporate tenancies</p> <p>Any tenancy where (to your knowledge)—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the landlord is the relevant authority; and</li> <li>ii. the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.</li> </ul>		
<p>g) Securities</p> <p>Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. that body (to your knowledge) has a place of</li> </ul>		

business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and

ii. either—

- a. the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
- b. if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

## 2. Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interests

Please answer all parts of this form. You must enter information in every box. If you do not have an interest in a particular question please put "None". All of your interests must be properly recorded in the appropriate areas.

h) I am a member or in a position of general control or management of the following body/bodies to which I have been appointed or nominated by the Authority

i) I am a member or in a position of general control or management of the following body/bodies exercising functions of a public nature

j) I am a member or in a position of general control or management of the following body/bodies directed to charitable purposes

k) I am a member or in a position of general control or management of the following body/bodies whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy

***Please retain one copy and send the original to Democratic Services***

Part 6: Members' Allowance Scheme

**MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

**(with effect from 1 April 2023)**

- **Introduction**
- **Who to Contact**
- **Income Tax & National Insurance**
- **Register of Allowances Paid to Members**
- **Local Government Pension Scheme**
- **The Scheme**

## **ALLOWANCES TO MEMBERS**

### **1. Introduction**

Allowances available to Members fall into two categories:-

- (a) Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance (where appropriate), both of which are paid automatically by monthly instalments, directly into Members' bank accounts.
- (b) Travel and Subsistence together with Childcare and Dependant Carers' Allowances have to be claimed on the claim form via iTrent and assistance can be provided by the Payroll Team. You should submit claim forms on the 15th day of each month (or within three days for inclusion with the payment of the following month's basic allowance). Claims must be made within two months of the date of the duty for which allowances are claimed.

You will receive a payslip detailing the amount of any Income Tax and National Insurance deductions made and the amount which has been paid into your bank account.

### **2. Who to Contact**

The Payroll Section within the City Solicitor's department will give Members help on any matters in connection with Members' Allowances and Members should feel completely free to contact that office at any time. Payroll deal with Members' Allowances and will be only too happy to help with any enquiries.

### **3. Income Tax & National Insurance**

- (a) Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances are liable for Income Tax and National Insurance.
- (b) Travel allowances for Members will be subject to tax and National Insurance contributions as appropriate.
- (c) Day subsistence allowances are not taxable if paid for a period of attendance at a meeting or conference which had been deemed an approved duty.
- (d) Payroll receive a personal tax code for each Member from HM Inspector of Taxes. In some cases, it will be necessary for newly elected councillors to complete various forms for the City Council and the Tax Office.



- (e) Councillors who suffer tax deductions on their allowances may be eligible to claim tax relief in respect of expenses incurred. A series of “Agreed Expenses Allowances” are negotiated with the Inland Revenue each year.

Details, once agreed, will be provided by the Payroll Section.

Other expenses may attract tax relief but no Standard Rate has been agreed with the Inspector who should be consulted in this respect.

Members wishing to claim tax relief should consult Inland Revenue.

Political expenses do not attract tax relief.

- (f) National Insurance deductions will arise when the payment in any month exceeds the thresholds set by the relevant Government Department.
- (g) Certain married women and widows may have already elected to pay the reduced rate of contribution. Any female Member who has so elected and holds a reduced rate certificate should forward it to the Payroll Section immediately. Members who have reached retirement age (65 for men and 60 for women) and have retired should be eligible for the status of non-liability, thereby being exempt from deductions. Exemption certificates are obtainable from the local office of the Benefits Agency appropriate to the Member’s home address and should be forwarded to the Payroll Section immediately.
- (h) For National Insurance purposes it is necessary for a record to be held of each Member’s date of birth and National Insurance number. Please supply this information to the Chief Finance Officer.
- (i) The pensions of Members who are retired may be affected by the payment of allowances, as a result of the earnings rule. Members who are pensioners are advised to obtain information on their personal position at their local Benefits Agency office.

#### **4. Local Government Pension Scheme**

Councillors are no longer able to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. Any historic benefits are available to previous contributors in accordance with relevant legislative and contractual rights.

## **5. Register of Allowances Paid to Members**

This statutory register is maintained by the Payroll team and is open to inspection by members of the public (including the press and other media) who are local government electors in Lincoln.

The 2003 Regulations require annual publication, at the financial year end, of certain allowances paid to each Member.

## **Members' Allowances and Travel and Subsistence Scheme**

### **1. General**

- 1.1 The Members' Allowance Scheme for the City of Lincoln Council has been prepared in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) Regulations 1995, the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and other appropriate legislation.
- 1.2 This scheme is effective from 1 April 2023 until 31 March 2024. It is applicable to all elected Members of the City of Lincoln Council.
- 1.3 Within the scheme "year" refers to the financial year ending on 31 March and "day" or "daily" refers to a 24-hour period beginning at 3am as specified in Regulations.

### **2. Allowances**

There are three types of allowance which are outlined below. The power to pay attendance allowance was abolished from 28 July 2001.

- 2.1 Basic Allowance – Payable to all elected Members. The amount for each year is shown in Schedule 1 to this scheme.
- 2.2 Special Responsibility Allowance – For each year, a Special Responsibility Allowance shall be paid to those Members who hold posts in Schedule 1. The amount for each post is also shown in Schedule 1.

In the event of one Member holding more than one specified post, only one Special Responsibility Allowance, whichever is the greater or greatest, shall be paid.

- 2.3 Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances are paid in respect of each year or part year.
- 2.4 Childcare and Dependant Carers' Allowance – An amount of £5 per hour may be claimed for each child or dependant who requires cover whilst a Member undertakes their duties. Payment will be made following submission of receipted invoices.

### **3. Renunciation**

- 3.1 A Councillor may, by notice in writing given to the Payroll Section, elect to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

#### **4. Travel and Subsistence**

- 4.1 All duties for which travel and subsistence expenses can be claimed are outlined in Schedule 4 and the payment rates and procedures are reproduced in Schedule 3.
- 4.2 Any claim for travel and subsistence must be made on the claim form which is available from the Payroll team. The claim form must be supported by relevant receipts.

## **SCHEDULE 1 – Allowances**

### **Basic Allowance**

The Basic Allowance is £5,427 per member.

### **Special Responsibility Allowance**

The table below shows the posts for which a Special Responsibility Allowance is paid together with the amount of payment per year. These allowances apply from 1 April 2023.

<b>Special Responsibility</b>	<b>Allowance</b>
Leader's Allowance	£11,346
Deputy Leader's Allowance	£7,338
Portfolio Holders	£6,006
Scrutiny Chairs	£4,671
Chair of Planning	£4,671
Chair of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire	£4,671
Chair of Audit	£4,671
Chair of Housing Appeals	£1,332
Chair of Personnel Appeals	£1,332
Chair of Licensing	£2,670
Chair of Ethics and Engagement	£1,332
Leader of the Opposition	£2,670

## **SCHEDULE 2 – Duties Eligible for Childcare and Dependant Carer's Allowance**

- A meeting of the Executive.
- A meeting of a Committee of the Executive.
- A meeting of the Authority.
- A meeting of a Committee, Sub-Committee or Panel of the Authority.

### **CONDITIONS**

Elected Members are limited to claiming £5 per hour per dependant on production of receipted invoices.

## **SCHEDULE 3 – Travelling and Subsistence Allowances**

### **TRAVEL ALLOWANCES**

#### **Public Transport**

1. The cost of a standard fare for public transport will be reimbursed for approved duties, subject to the submission of a receipt or proof of purchase.

#### **Private vehicles**

2. Rates payable for travel by a private vehicle used by a Member and for official passengers will be those equivalent to HM Revenue and Customs Approved Mileage Rates for the time being. Rates and changes in rates will be notified to Members.

Members are responsible for ensuring that private vehicles used by them comply with all relevant legislation for the purposes for which they are used including safety, taxation and insurance.

3. Car parking and tolls will be reimbursed at the actual cost incurred with claims supported by receipts.

#### **Taxi Cab**

4. In case of urgency, or where no public transport is reasonably available:-
  - (a) the amount of the actual fare and any reasonable gratuity paid; and
  - (b) in any other case, the amount of the fare for travel by appropriate public transport.

#### **Subsistence Allowances**

5. The rate of subsistence allowance shall be:-
  - (a) In the case of an absence, not involving an absence overnight, from the usual place of residence of more than four hours for each meal claimed:-

(i)	Breakfast	£4.92
(ii)	Lunch	£6.77
(iii)	Tea	£2.67
(iv)	Evening Meal	£8.38

- (b) In the case of an absence overnight from the usual place of residence - £79.82, provided that for such an absence overnight in London, or for the purpose of attendance at an annual

conference including an annual meeting of the Local Government Association or such other association of bodies, as the Secretaries of State may for the time being approved for the purpose - £91.04.

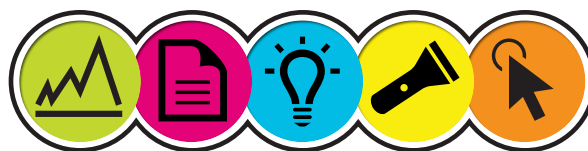
Any rate determined under this sub-paragraph shall be deemed to cover a continuous period of absence of twenty-four hours.

7. The rates specified above shall be reduced by an appropriate amount in respect of any meal provided free of charge by an Authority or body during the period to which the allowance relates.
8. When main meals (i.e. full breakfast, lunch or dinner) are taken on trains during a period for which there is an entitlement to day subsistence, the reasonable cost of the meals (including VAT), may be reimbursed in full. However, in such circumstances, reimbursement for the reasonable cost of a meal would replace the entitlement to the day subsistence allowance for the appropriate meal period.

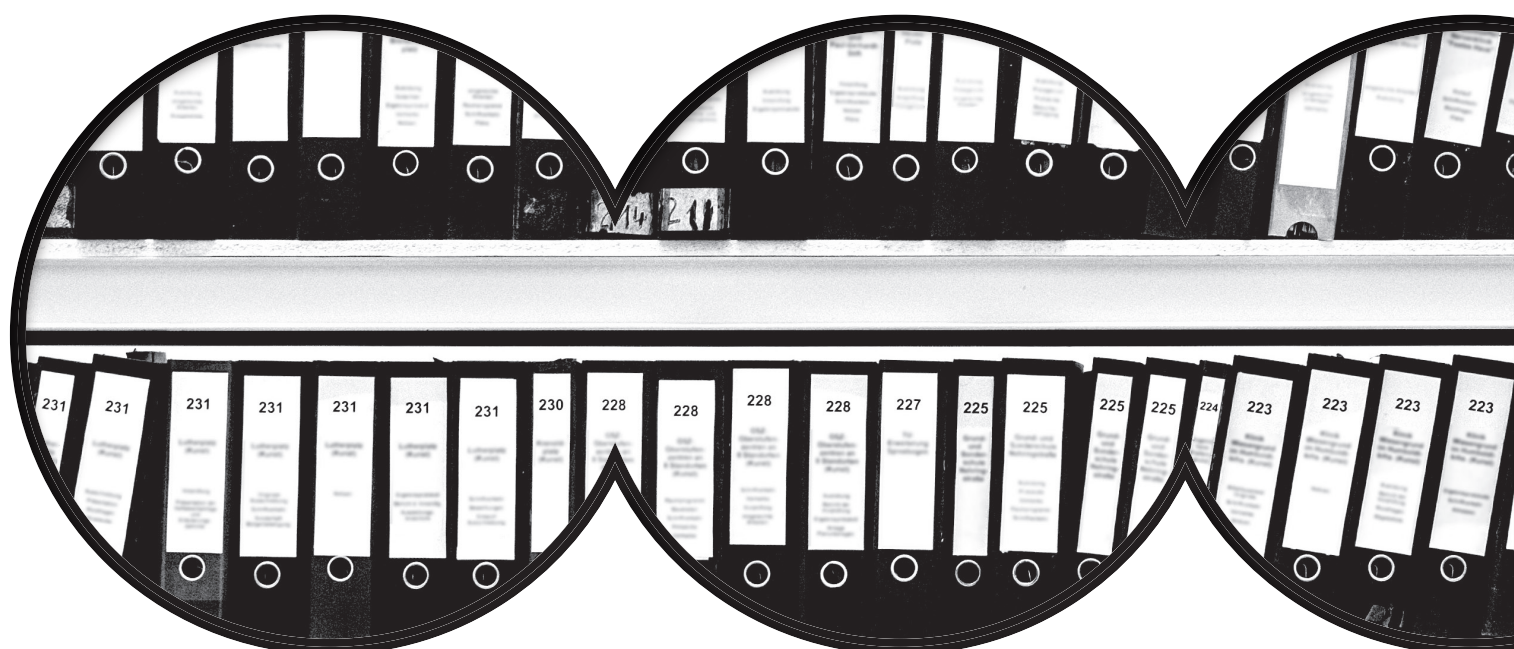
#### **SCHEDULE 4 – Duties for which Travel and Subsistence may be claimed**

Any attendance at a meeting or seminar outside of the City of Lincoln which has been deemed an approved duty.





# A councillor's workbook on handling casework



# Contents

Introduction	3
What is casework?	4
Raising your profile – prompting others to get in touch	6
Dealing effectively with the casework you generate	9
Data protection – some considerations	14
Monitoring your effectiveness	17
Final summary	20
Appendix – sources of further information and support	21

There are a number of complementary workbooks and elearning modules which will also assist you when looking at the issue of casework and how to deal with it effectively. Topics such as community leadership, neighbourhood and community engagement and facilitation and conflict resolution will also enable you to look at your wider ward councillor role and how best to consider matters brought to you as a community leader or advocate for others. The councillor workbooks can be found at

<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/highlighting-political-leadership/community-leadership/councillor-workbooks>

To access the elearning modules please go to <https://lms.learningnexus.co.uk/LGA/>

A list of useful additional information and support is also set out in the Appendix to the workbook.

# Introduction

This workbook has been designed as a distance learning aid for local councillors. It is intended to provide councillors with insight and assistance with the key skills which will help you to be most effective in your role. Some of the content may be of most use to more newly elected councillors, but nonetheless if you have been a councillor for some time, the workbook should serve as a useful reminder of some of the key skills, approaches and tactics that make for an effective ward councillor and in dealing with the casework you may receive in that role. It may even challenge you to reconsider how you have approached aspects of the role to date.

Those councillors who are new to local government will recognise that there are many aspects to being an effective ward or division councillor. The workbook will help you to get up to speed on the main areas that require focus and attention. In effect, when dealing with casework. It should provide you with some pointers on how to develop a style and approach that you are comfortable with, and that enables you to be most effective in your day to day duties.

The workbook can be used as a standalone learning aid or alongside other material you may cover such as e learning modules or sessions within your own council. It is recognised that each individual must decide how best to use and develop their influencing skills, based on individual preference and confidence.

You do not need to complete it all in one session and may prefer to work through the material at your own pace. The key requirement is to think about your own approach and how the material relates to your local situation, the people you serve and the council you represent. In working through the material contained in this workbook you will encounter a number of features designed to help you think about your role in handling casework.

These features are represented by the symbols shown below:



**Guidance** – this is used to indicate guidance, research, quotations, explanations and definitions that you may find helpful.



**Challenges** – these are questions or queries raised in the text which ask you to reflect on your role or approach – in essence, they are designed to be thought-provokers.



**Case studies** – these are ‘pen pictures’ of approaches used by councils elsewhere.



**Useful links** – these are signposts to sources of further information that may help with principles, processes, methods and approaches. A full list of useful additional information and support is also set out in the appendices to the workbook.

# What is casework?

Dealing with the people in your community, understanding the issues and concerns they face, and being equipped with the skills, confidence and ability to take action in response to their queries, is an important and valued role for any councillor. The problems and issues local people raise with you are often referred to as 'casework'.

Casework can sometimes lead on to policy development or issue campaigning, but can be distinguished from these by virtue of the fact that casework usually deals with the resolution of an individual problem.

## Where does your casework come from?

Casework will often be picked up by councillors through their day to day activities as an elected representative of the area, ie through letters, telephone calls, emails and door knocking. The period before, during and after an election is likely to be a particularly popular time for people to raise issues or concerns.

The amount of casework you receive can vary considerably and it is probably true to say that the higher the level of deprivation in your area, the more casework you are likely to face. But if the casework in your in-tray is consistently sparse, ask yourself the crucial question – is this because you represent a very self-sufficient community, or is it because your profile is too low?

However it is important to know how your casework might be generated and to be aware of the likely issues in your ward which could give rise to increased casework referrals.



### Casework – some examples

**Direct query** – a neighbour asks if you could find out what progress has been made in processing her application for a renovation grant.

**Indirect query** – a daughter, ringing up on behalf of her frail, elderly parent, asks if her mother is entitled to claim council tax benefit.

**Complaint** – a local housing tenant e-mails you to complain about the repeated vandalism to her council property.

**Service request** – a shopkeeper asks if you could arrange for an extra trade waste collection at his premises.

**Community issue** – a group of parents lobby you to prompt the council to remove a burnt out vehicle from a nearby park.



The role of a councillor has many facets. When residents contact you, they are frequently at their lowest ebb, have exhausted all avenues open to them and are desperate for help. Sometimes it is the first time someone has really listened to them, often I visit them in their own homes, allowing them to feel comfortable. Being a councillor isn't clinical, we occupy the rough, blurred edges of council work; the butter in the sandwich, not always necessary, but can help to keep the pieces of bread together!

Casework comes in all shapes and sizes, from the right size bin and its collection to supporting a family to receive the right school placement. When a child has specific needs, whether educational or medical, the views of parents are often ignored. They deal with the situation 24/7, yet their point of view can weigh so little. The prospect of months and years of uncertainty, tribunal, and professionals making decisions can be all too overwhelming. Councillors can bridge that gap, listen, relay information and support, but most are not in a position to make decisions.

Councillors also attend meetings, reading and digesting copious amounts of material. No one warns you! Councillors must take their role seriously, participate in scrutiny, and attend events that effect people and local government. A need for a general understanding of what's happening.

The highlights include being invited to the foster carers excellent tea party for our looked after children and succeeding in resolving residents problems.

**Councillor Liz Hazell**  
Walsall council



### Challenge 1 – your recent casework

Using your existing knowledge or any research you are able to carry out on the council's behalf, think about the nature of any casework you have dealt with in recent months. Briefly describe any examples you can think of under the headings below and summarise any action you took to tackle the queries or concerns raised:

<b>Direct query</b>	<b>Action taken</b>
<b>Indirect query</b>	<b>Action taken</b>
<b>Complaint</b>	<b>Action taken</b>
<b>Service request</b>	<b>Action taken</b>
<b>Community Issue</b>	<b>Action taken</b>

Reflect on the examples you have given. Do you feel comfortable that you did everything you could to resolve these matters? To what extent were your residents satisfied with your help and advice? Have you made any efforts to check whether the matters raised affected other local people who may not have approached you for help?

# Raising your profile – prompting others to get in touch

Raising your profile is not just about being honest enough to admit that many people in your ward will not know who you are and may be even less likely to recognise that you are their local councillor. Taking steps to make yourself known, and available, to local people should help you to ensure that the bulk of the casework you deal with represents the issues of greatest concern to local residents.

It is likely that you will have tried some of the more traditional ways of raising your profile in the community, eg media and press coverage, meetings with community groups, posters or leaflet drops. But are you also using, or considering, other, more interactive, approaches to prompt others to get in touch?

For example:

**Advice surgeries** – these enable you to meet residents, discuss their concerns and build an understanding of what can be done to tackle the issues raised. In a traditional advice surgery, councillors advertise a time and place when they will be available to speak to residents, eg perhaps a couple of hours on a Saturday in a local library or village hall. An alternative is to run a street surgery, where councillors knock on doors to solicit casework. Both approaches require careful planning and good advertising to ensure that opportunities for engaging with local people are maximised.



## Case study

I believe that casework is the most important work we do as local councillors – it's the work which most closely connects us with the residents who make up our electorate, and whom we have a duty to represent.

Although I attend residents' associations and community meetings, I don't hold my own surgeries. I prefer to go looking for casework – I gather most of my casework by knocking on doors and asking whether there is anything I can help with. This way I get to speak to the many people who, for all sorts of reasons, would never come to meetings – or who think the problem they have is too small to bother anyone with.

For my first few months as a councillor, I kept a notebook and gave each item of casework a single page. I would carry it about with me and quickly note things like names, addresses, phone numbers, and progress updates – and then finally strikethrough the page when the issue was dealt with. I was on my third notebook after a few months, and decided I needed a better system. I spoke with one of my more experienced colleagues from another local authority, and he sent me a customised spreadsheet he'd made to record casework, which I've been using now for well over six months. The way we record casework is really important – because it's essential that we have the information to hand in order to follow things up, chase loose ends, and keep contact information easily to hand.

**Cllr Niall Hodson**, Sunderland City Council





The Local Government Association's (LGA) Councillors Guide and the workbooks on Effective ward councillor, Community leadership and Neighbourhood and community engagement provide some useful complementary advice on whether to hold advice surgeries, the alternatives you may wish to consider and how to engage with your community effectively.



### Alternatives to surgeries

- Being super-visible at local meetings
- 'Rolling surgeries'
- Encourage telephone calls (or even video calls!)
- Liaison with local agencies such as schools, children's centres, advice agencies
- Social media
- Are you seen as the 'go to' person?

**Councillor Ed Turner**  
Oxford City Council



### Keeping a high profile

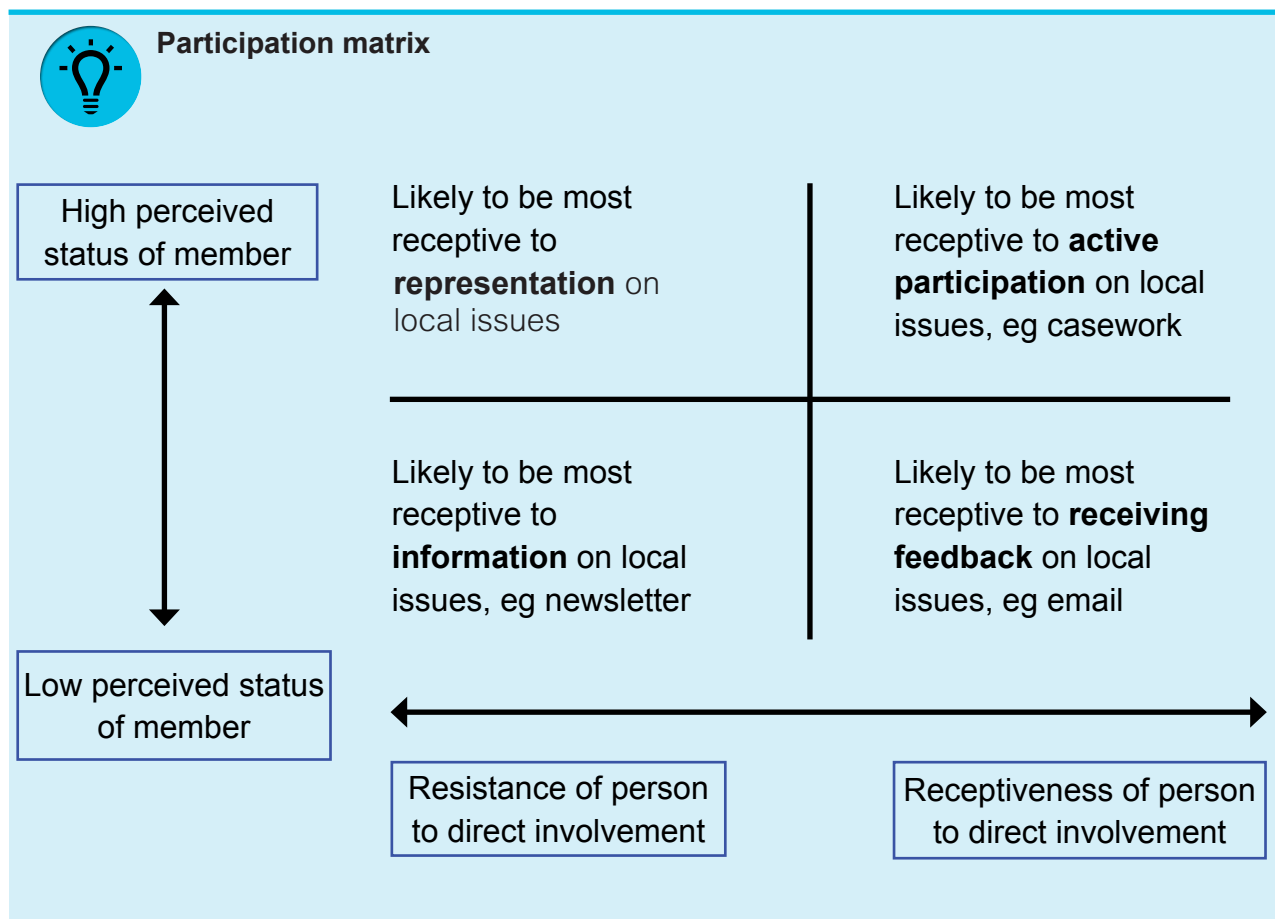
**Publish** a regular newsletter, liaise with the local press, keep our website up-to-date, and hold surgeries and consultations. Getting a response may take time for your residents to get to know you if you are newly elected

**Blogging/ Vlogging** – a weblog, 'blog', or video blog (Vlog) are online versions of journals updated on a regular basis, like a diary. Visually it looks just like a website, but usually has a simpler design and fewer pages. A growing number of ward councillors are now using blogs/vlogs to publish reports of their activities on the web and to solicit responses from their residents via e-mail or online surveys. Blogging can help to prompt local people to raise issues of concern and can enable others to give their views on any matters identified.

As community leaders, ward councillors must do what they can to represent the voices of all sections of the community. This may include championing the interests of people who often find it difficult or uncomfortable to articulate their issues or concerns, eg some younger, older or disabled citizens or some people from minority ethnic groups. A proportion of your casework is therefore likely to be concerned with 'speaking for the unheard.'

But don't imagine that everyone will want to come to you with their casework queries. While some people will want to engage with you and actively participate in a dialogue about their issues and concerns, others will be content to let you represent their interests or just keep them informed about what is going on locally. Much of this will depend on each person's perception of 'authority' figures generally, and their receptiveness to direct engagement.

The participation matrix below shows levels of participation that residents like. For example, if one constituent has a high opinion of the councillor but is resistant to direct involvement then they will prefer to receive information about local issues rather than direct feedback. It is worth considering this when you are in your ward.





# Dealing effectively with the casework you generate

Dealing with casework will require you to develop your own simple, but effective, ways of managing both the information and paper flow. If you have been a councillor for some time, you have probably developed systems for doing this by default, ie finding out, by trial and error, what works well for you and what doesn't.

Some councils have begun to explore the use of technology-based solutions to help councillors – so-called e-Casework systems. But a sensible use of the equipment you already have available in your home or office and an efficient paper-based record system will serve just as well. Good note-keeping and diary management are essential, as well as a good filing system.

For those councillors that like to make use of technology, spreadsheets and databases can help to store, search and retrieve details of individual cases, alongside the use of email as an essential communication tool. It is also worth noting that many electoral rolls are now available electronically, offering you the possibility of being able to merge this information with a proprietary data management system to cut down on the time required to search for people's names and addresses.

Whatever your preferred approach and regardless of the systems you employ, there will be a number of general steps that you will need to take in handling the casework you generate. These are discussed in the sections below.



## Three tips for dealing with casework

Install a dedicated telephone line – use an answering machine or service for calls outside of normal hours.

Use a simple form to capture the key facts about each case, i.e. names, addresses, contact details, casework history, others involved etc.

Make a record of all calls, conversations and action taken – it doesn't have to be onerous, a simple diary 'log' is usually sufficient.



## Handling casework in a digital environment

The use of information and communications technology can also assist councillors by enabling residents to send electronic documents and photographic evidence relevant to some casework situations, eg it is not uncommon for residents to send councillors digital photographs of potholes in the road or community sites that have been blighted by vandalism.

Like many people, a growing number of councillors are finding that the use of social media tools like Facebook and Twitter is helping them to raise their profile and build engagement with their residents. While blogging/vlogging, emailing and the use of social media may not be every councillor's preferred route for generating casework, it is likely that some people who might be unwilling or unable to attend an advice surgery may prefer the ease and comfort of corresponding with their ward councillor from their own home and at a time that suits them.

As with any work a councillor does it is an ever changing landscape. In the context of large cuts to local government financing as well as councillors working harder than ever before to make sure their communities are represented casework too has changed. Broadly speaking councillors received queries from the residents via telephone, letters or ward surgeries; this was certainly still very much the case in 2011 when I first became a councillor.

Recently we have seen a channel shift towards emails and social media with it being much less common now to receive a letter or surgery request. As times change we are receiving more enquiries through social media, sometimes in a direct message through Facebook or Twitter, these are what I refer to as reactive inquiries. A resident asks you for advice or help and you react. The other way to engage with residents is if you keep an eye on some of your local community groups on Facebook. There will sometime be queries or complaints about how the council has taken a decision or a concern about their personal situation; If you can support them, why not pop on a post advising that you can help and ask them to call or private message you. This is how I proactively seek to help residents where possible.

The final important principle of handling casework is never promise what you cannot deliver. Managing expectations is now essential, whether that be how long it will take to get back to a constituent with a response or what and can be done due to financial or legal restraints. If we cannot help the resident in the way they wish is there an alternative and if not explain why something cannot be done. Never offer advice that you are unsure is accurate, if you do not know the answer to a query just explain you need further clarity on the matter before giving a response. I find most people appreciate honesty from their councillor and are happy to work with you within the constraints of local government if you explain this to them from the outset.

**Cllr Amy Cross** Blackpool Council



## Challenge 2 – the casework challenge

Think about the systems you employ for handling casework. Write down how you would find out the following information about the cases you have dealt with in the past year:

**The proportion of cases successfully resolved?**

**The number of people under 30 that have contacted you with casework queries?**

**Look again at what you have written. Could you make any changes to the systems you employ to enable you to extract this and other useful information more readily?**

## Identify what the problem is

You will need to establish the facts and find out how your constituent wants you to help. This will include identifying whether there is a long history to the problem and who has been approached in the past. It is worth approaching each case with a degree of humility – some residents with evidence of failure by ‘the council’ may see you as their last resort and some may be angry about the way they have been treated.

Avoid promising to sort out every problem, but do offer a sympathetic ear. While you can use your knowledge, contacts and advocacy skills to assist people, it is best to try and get people to help themselves. And keep the discussion focused on solutions and what can be done, rather than looking for scapegoats and people to blame.

Your residents will be looking for support, but they’ll be looking for answers and solutions even more. Understanding the nature and scale of the problem presented will often require you to use your judgement. Some people may try to use you or may avoid telling you everything you need to know. Before you can assist, you need to get all of the relevant facts and information.

## Refer the problem to the appropriate council department

Having identified what the problem is, you should communicate with the council officers who handle councillors’ enquiries or relevant service officers, if that is how your council operates. You may want to put your concerns or questions in writing, although most councillors find that a quick face to face discussion, telephone call or email is quicker and easier in sorting out casework problems.

Remember also to give clear instructions to the council officers, either to write to your constituent with a copy for you, or to work through you. Don’t leave them to decide which approach you favour. And remember to copy the constituent in on what you have sent to officers unless it is confidential.



The LGA’s workbook on Handling complaints for service improvement, written in partnership with the Local Government Ombudsman, will provide you with useful information on what matters should be dealt with by you directly and what should be referred on to other agencies such as government departments or statutory bodies

Get in the habit of taking copies of all correspondence and treat your residents’ affairs with appropriate confidentiality, ie always ask permission before sharing their information or views with a third party and take steps to protect the information you store about them. If you are in any doubt about your legal responsibilities regarding data protection, speak to your council’s legal department.

## Casework – dealing with anger

People who approach members about serious or intractable problems can often be stressed or angry. Remember:

- be polite and assertive but never aggressive – this will only increase the tension
- don’t promise more than you can deliver – this will create problems in the long run
- avoid taking personal responsibility for a problem – the blame and hostility may shift on to you
- approach the council if you need help or training in dealing with awkward customers
- don’t respond to racist, sexist or offensive remarks – draw the discussion to a close.



### Challenge 3 – the casework challenge

**Consider the following casework example. Write down the steps you might take to tackle the issues presented:**

The Oaks is a council estate in your ward. It was built in the 1960s and is made up of three streets arranged in a horseshoe, down the centre of which run some old garages which were originally designed for residents' use. The estate gets its name from the woodland which once covered the site. You have been approached by Mrs Dyer, an elderly constituent on the estate, who wants the council to take some action to tackle her concerns. You already know that parts of the estate are run down and can look untidy. You are now being told that the garages on The Oaks have become a 'no go' area for local people. Cars are apparently being abandoned on a regular basis and the empty garages have become a haven for groups of teenagers who create noise and havoc into the night. She also tells you that the buildings are being used for drug dealing and storing stolen cars.

**Look again at the ideas you have written down. To what extent have you rushed into a list of possible 'solutions' to the problems presented before checking out the relevant facts?**

If the problems presented are widespread, you might expect to have received comments or complaints from other residents. Could you speak to others on the estate, of different ages, to get a more balanced view? If the alleged cases of noise, drug taking and vehicle abandonment are a reality, isn't it likely that the council or other partner agencies (eg the police) will have some evidence for this? It may be that Mrs Dyer is correct in her assessment and that action is needed to tackle a growing community problem, but some early legwork and a few reality checks might help to strengthen your understanding of what is really going on.

# Data protection – some considerations

The Data Protection Act 1998 gives people rights regarding personal information that others hold about them and imposes controls on individuals and organisations that use personal information.

The act applies to councillors in the same way that it does to council employees and covers paper records and computerised systems using equipment owned by councillors or provided by the council.

Councillors are regarded as data controllers if they process personal data and are required to notify the information commissioner of the reasons why they hold and process personal data. Councillors using personal data must keep it secure and misuse of data is a punishable offence.



## Registering as a data controller

As a councillor there are three distinct roles you perform where you may process personal data and therefore are required to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and to register as Data Controller.

1. Council committees and council meetings work (this is covered by your council's notification).
2. Campaigning for election or otherwise acting on behalf of a political party (you should be covered by the party's notification), but check with your constituency chairperson or secretary. Councillors who do not belong to a party will not be covered and therefore will need to notify.

3. Carrying out ward casework eg acting as a representative, in which case, in addition to complying with the requirements for processing personal data, you are the 'data controller' and are required to notify the Information Commissioners Office. In 2011 the Information Commissioners Office wrote to councillors urging them to check their data protection obligations, as failure to register by councillors who handle personal data risks a fine of up to £5,000.

The ICO has issued data protection guidance for elected and prospective members of local authorities:  
[www.ico.gov.uk/for\\_organisations/sector\\_guides/political.aspx](http://www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/sector_guides/political.aspx)

Thus as a councillor you should decide if you are processing personal data and the role in which you are doing so. If you are make sure you comply with the Act and also check if you need to notify.

This is a complex subject and councillors seeking more information should visit the Information Commissioner Office website for further information at <https://ico.org.uk/>

The Data Protection Act 1998 legislation will be replaced with the General Data Protection Regulation as of May 2018. However at the point of publication of this workbook, the LGA is not yet aware if any of the information above will be subject to change or amendment. However it is assumed that the requirements affecting the need for councillors to register as data controllers will be heightened if anything.



#### **Challenge 4 – helping people to help themselves**

Consider the following examples of casework. Write down the steps you would take in helping people to resolve the issues presented.

**Two older residents who have complained to you about the ‘inappropriate language’ used by staff in their local library.**

**A single mother, with literacy problems, who has come to you asking if you can help her to fill out various benefit claim forms from the council.**

**An elderly resident who says he cannot afford to continue with his council tax payments and wants you to let the council know that ‘he would rather go to prison than ‘pay up’**

Reflect on your answers to the cases above. Is there a risk that you are taking on too much personal responsibility in seeking to resolve these matters? To what extent are some of the issues raised outside of your control or influence?

## Provide feedback

After you have made initial enquiries, let the constituent know what you are doing and keep them up to date with progress and eventual outcomes. They will not know what is going on unless you tell them.

## Consider the wider issues

Reflect on the issues raised by the casework and let your co-councillors know. A number of similar concerns raised with councillors may suggest that an issue needs to be dealt with by a new or revised policy or a scrutiny review. Where you have had a success, it is worth letting your fellow ward councillors know in case they face a similar situation. And always try and publicise your success to local residents through leaflets and newsletters.

Some of your casework queries should prompt you to think about 'the bigger picture', ie why problems have occurred in the first place, whether the issues presented by your residents are just the 'tip of the iceberg' in terms of wider community concerns or whether the case is likely to affect other local people.

A good example might be a sudden increase in the numbers of people coming to you with complaints about housing benefits payments. It is possible that the four or five people you find yourself talking to have isolated and unrelated problems. But equally the cases may be symptomatic of a wider concern – the introduction of a new computer system perhaps, or a change in the rules surrounding benefit entitlement. Your efforts may be focused on tackling the symptoms of the difficulty, when you really need to be speaking to officers about the cause of the problem.



# Monitoring your effectiveness

Periodically, it is always sensible to review your approach to casework and consider whether what you do could be improved. For example:

- ask your councillor colleagues how they tackle the information and paper flow and whether they have any good tips you haven't thought of
- ask your residents for feedback on what they felt you did well in responding to their queries and anything you could do to improve
- look up the websites of other councils or individual councillors' blogs to see what others are doing to improve their response to casework
- monitor a number of key facts and statistics about your casework to ensure that you are targeting the people that need the most help and are being effective in resolving as many queries as you can.

It may be that your periodic reviews will highlight weaknesses in your systems for recording and storing information which you can address. Perhaps it will flag concerns about the volume of cases you are dealing with, which should prompt you to think about ways of getting other councillors or officers to help you with some of the burden. Equally, the activity might demonstrate how much of a difference you have made to people's lives through your casework interventions and underline the importance of being visible and accessible to local people as a ward councillor.

## Monitoring your performance

How many people contacted you with problems in the last year?

Who were these people – gender, ethnicity, age, class, employment status?

How did people contact you?

How many cases were you able to resolve satisfactorily?

How does this compare with previous years?

What was the profile of the problem, eg housing, social services, benefits etc.?

How does your casework load and type compare to that of other councillors?



### Challenge 5 – seeing the bigger picture

Look at the individual cases presented below and write down some of the potential 'big picture' issues that might underlie each.

**Four separate cases reported to you of wheeled bins not being emptied on one estate.**

**A number of complaints about the long queue in the council's main reception area.**

**A rise in the number of queries you have received about on-street parking by people commuting in from areas outside of the ward.**

Look again at the examples above. How often do you think about the potential 'big picture' issues when you are dealing with your real casework queries?

Casework can be both rewarding and frustrating in equal measure. Each case will be different and each must be handled with a degree of humility as residents with evidence of failure by 'the council' may see their ward councillor as a last resort. The reasons for any real or perceived failures by the council can be many and varied, eg the unhelpfulness of staff, some of the jargon in council literature or the unavailability of services at hours that suit people's busy lives.

In presenting their issues to you, residents may have multiple problems or deprivations: illiteracy, lack of numeracy, illness or fear of authority. In providing casework support you should act as a 'one-stop shop', wherever possible, in listening to and responding to their concerns. This ability to make a difference to the lives of local people sits at the very heart of your community leadership role.

For further advice on this particularly difficult area there is a councillor workbook entitled Supporting residents with complex issues. Along with an accompanying elearning module of the same name this will enable you to look at this area to consider how best to advise and assist with issues raised by your ward residents

# Final summary

Where do you go from here?



## Challenge 6

**Look back over the material contained in earlier sections of this workbook and consider the following:**

a) What key action points can you identify to improve your effectiveness as a ward councillor in dealing with casework, ie what three or four things might you start doing, keep doing or stop doing?

b) Have you identified any gaps in your knowledge or shortcomings in your personal skills? If so, please set these out below and identify how any further training development might help you, eg further reading/research, attending courses, coaching, mentoring, work shadowing, etc.

# Appendix – sources of further information and support

## Printed publications

The Councillors' Guide, Local Government Association [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

The LGA website has many pages discussing community leadership and a number of publications, a series of case studies, the Knowledge Hub, and development programmes for councillors and council officers. For more information please go to [www.local.gov.uk/our-support/highlighting-political-leadership](http://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/highlighting-political-leadership)

## Useful websites

The LGA website is an invaluable source of help and advice for all those in local government and contains guidance and case studies on the community leadership role of councillors. It further provides advice on the effective use of social media and communication with your local residents or businesses. [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)



**Local Government Association**

18 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3HZ

Telephone 020 7664 3000

Fax 020 7664 3030

Email [info@local.gov.uk](mailto:info@local.gov.uk)

[www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

© Local Government Association, November 2017

For a copy in Braille, larger print or audio,  
please contact us on 020 7664 3000.  
We consider requests on an individual basis.

## PERSONAL SAFETY A GUIDE FOR COUNCILLORS

The relationship between councillors and the communities they serve is at the heart of what being a councillor is all about. The face-to-face contact when constituents can share problems and concerns is vital to making that relationship work. The following advice is based on the guidance issued by the Local Government Association and aims to help councillors carry out their role safely and effectively.

### Introduction

The purpose of this guide is not to raise unnecessary anxiety, but to set out what personal safety measures can be taken to prevent and deal with those rare circumstances when they might find themselves in situations where they become concerned for their safety.

Councillors are encouraged to:

- assess the risks to personal safety in carrying out their public duties;
- recognise potential danger from personal contact or internet / postal communication and take appropriate action;
- be proactive in considering personal safety through, for instance, the use of a lone working device (Reliance Device\*), ensuring your partner, a friend or a relative has information on your activities, and ensuring your mobile telephone is charged; and
- if possible, vary daily routines, such as leaving and returning home at different times or via different routes.

\*A Reliance Device is a discreet device which allows for communication with the Resilience Call Centre and / or emergency services. When activated during an incident, the device provides information by a pre-set user activated amber alert detailing the location via GPS and will automatically record sound, which can be used as vital evidence. If you would like a Reliance Device, please contact Democratic Services. You will receive training on how to use and maintain the device.

### Ward Surgeries

Each councillor's arrangements will vary according to local circumstances and it is unlikely that each councillor can use a venue for their surgery, which meet every aspect of good practice. What follows are suggestions about how to make a surgery safe and effective.

- **Do not hold surgeries alone in an otherwise empty building.** Try and get someone to assist you. This not only makes you safer, but also makes it much easier to manage a busy surgery. If you are currently doing surgeries alone, discuss how this can be changed with fellow councillors or officers.
- **Consider the room layout.** For example, you should sit nearest the door with the constituents seated on the other side of the table. The chairs are best set out at an angle of 45 degrees as sitting directly opposite someone can be seen as confrontational.
- **Considering the waiting area.** If there is no separate waiting room, try to ensure that the waiting constituents are as far away as possible from those whom you are talking to.
- **Try to make sure there are no heavy items or any other objects in the room that could be used as weapons.**
- **Check mobile phone signal and charge.** Before the surgery commences, check your mobile phone signal in case you need to use it in an emergency. Also, see if you can use a landline.
- **Consider using a Reliance Device.** If you would like the additional personal safety assurance, please contact Democratic Services, who can provide a Reliance Device. This is a device issued to frontline employees, which can be switched on and links directly with the police and is also a recording device to ensure that there is a record of any incident. Training will be provided.
- **Know what to do in an emergency.** It would be good practice for you or any helpers to know what to do in an emergency.
- **Record any incidents.** This should include all types of unacceptable behaviour. Records of incidents should be dated, timed and signed. Please report any incidents of unacceptable behaviour to the Democratic Services Team.

If you are looking for suitable places in which to hold a surgery, try to get a venue:

- where there are other people about;
- where the names of any visitors are recorded;
- where there is a designated waiting area;
- where the meeting is in view of the reception or public area and is connected (if possible) to the reception by an alarm and there is a procedure for dealing with calls for assistance, and there is a vision panel in the door;
- where the meeting room has a means of escape and any visitors are not able to lock the door from the inside.

If you are unsure about what venues are available in your ward, please contact Democratic Services, who may be able to advise.



## **Visits by Constituents to City Hall**

If you decide to meet any constituent at City Hall, either as a planned appointment or unannounced, it is recommended that you request Democratic Services to book a meeting room for you. You may request that an officer accompanies you with the constituent – even if they wait outside the door whilst the meeting takes place so that they are on hand should assistance be required.

## **Dealing with a Variety of Behaviours**

Try to be calmness in the face of whatever comes up. If you are subjected to offensive, threatening, intimidating, racist, homophobic or derogatory remarks, you are within your rights to bring the meeting to an end and seek assistance. It is recommended that you take a detailed note of the incident and person(s) involved and inform the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Democratic Services Team of the incident. You may also wish to inform Lincolnshire Police.

Some constituents may have additional needs or a mental health condition, and it is important that they are still able to seek advice and representation from their councillors. Advice on supporting such constituents is available from a number of organisations, including the Autistic Society and Mind.

## **Home Visits**

If you conduct any home visits:

- try to visit during normal working and daylight hours;
- Let other people the timing and location of your visit, what time to expect you back, your contact details, who you are seeing, when you have finished your visit and away from the site; and keep a record of your whereabouts.

If necessary, you can let the person you are visiting know there is such a record or that you are expected at another place by a certain time etc or make a call on your mobile phone during the visit.

If necessary, councillors can contact the Democratic Services Team who will arrange for the Violence to Employee database to be checked and to also contact the Anti-Social Behaviour Team to see if there are any known issues.

## **Personal Callers to Councillors' Private Homes**

Publicity by the Council as to how to contact councillors and details of ward surgeries reduces the chances of unwanted callers.

It is recommended to check who is at the door and to keep your home and property secure. If you would like any additional advice on home security, please contact the Democratic Services Team.

In the event of an incident, please record as much detail as you can, including descriptions, should you decide to take any action over the matter. If you are concerned, report the incident to the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and the Democratic Services Team. You might also want to notify Lincolnshire Police.

## **Telephone Calls**

If you receive any malicious, nuisance or abusive calls:

- try to keep the caller talking;
- note any clues the caller may provide as to sex, age, accent etc;
- write down the details immediately to assist police at a later stage; and
- inform the Democratic Services Team who will then pass all the information to the Anti-Social Behaviour Team.

## **Mail and E-mails**

Any malicious or abusive letters or e-mails should be reported to the Democratic Services Team. Do not dispose of the letter, or delete the email, as these can be used as evidence.

## **Reporting Incidents**

Any incidents of concern, even if fairly minor, should be reported to the Democratic Services Team so that an Incident Report can be completed. This enables the authority to undertake proper monitoring and decide if any action is needed to prevent a recurrence. You may also want to advise neighbouring ward colleagues of such incidents.

If you have been subject to or witnessed a hate incident or crime you have a duty to report it. By taking appropriate action you may help to prevent a similar incident recurring.

## **Notification of Known Violent Customers**

Occasionally, the Democratic Services Team is notified of individuals who “pose a risk” to council employees. In these circumstances, an email will be sent to the relevant ward councillors. This will be basic information – name, address of person, age and description (if known). However, enough information will be provided to prevent a councillor from putting themselves at risk. If, on receiving such an email, you have any doubts or would like some further advice please contact the Democratic Services Team. In addition, if you have any concerns about a particular property, then you can contact Corporate Health and Safety to check if there are any flags on the system.

## **Terrorist-level threats**

Although the purpose of this guide is not to cover this in detail, it provides a good opportunity to highlight the current safety advice should an incident occur.

The main 'Stay Safe' principles are to "Run – Hide – Tell". If you require more information, please visit the National Counter Terrorism Support Office's website.

Anyone with information about a crime can call 101, 999 in an emergency or the police anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.

## **Other Guidance**

Local Authorities have responsibilities for the safety of councillors while on council business as they do for officers. If you would like any further guidance or specific assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Democratic Services.

This page is intentionally blank.