

Colchester Borough Council

Chief Finance Officer Protocol

- (1) By virtue of section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chief Finance Officer has responsibility for the administration of the Council's financial affairs. By virtue of sections 114 and 114A of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 has a duty to report upon decisions or actions which have or may result in the Council or Executive incurring expenditure which is unlawful, or if it appears that expenditure is likely to exceed the resources available to meet it. The Chief Finance Officer will discharge the responsibilities with determination and in a manner which will enhance the reputation of the Council.
- (2) The Council will provide the Chief Finance Officer with such resources as he/she may reasonably request in order to fulfil the responsibilities of the post.
- (3) The Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer will meet as necessary to consider and recommend action in connection with financial issues and other associated matters.
- (4) The Chief Finance Officer will be afforded access to all parts of all formal meetings of the Council, the Cabinet, Panels, Committees and Sub-Committees, and will be provided with copies of all reports to Members on request.
- (5) The Chief Finance Officer will be provided with copies of all agendas and minutes of meetings of the Senior Management Team and will be invited to attend those parts of informal meetings conducted by the Head of Paid Service/Executive Management Team with the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members, Chairman of the Scrutiny Panel or the Mayor which concern matters having reference to the responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer. Where possible, advance notice of such meetings will be given to the Chief Finance Officer. The Chief Finance Officer may request to attend any meetings which he/she considers to have reference to the responsibilities of the post, which request shall not be unreasonably denied.
- (6) Members, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors will alert the Chief Finance Officer to all emerging issues of concern having reference to the responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer.
- (7) The Chief Finance Officer will inform the Head of Paid Service or the Monitoring Officer of any investigation he/she proposes to commence. The Chief Finance Officer will also ensure that the Head of Paid Service and the Monitoring Officer are kept informed and provided with up to date information on all emerging issues.
- (8) The Chief Finance Officer will develop good liaison and working relations with the Council's Auditor.

- (9) In relation to any matter within the areas of responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer, he/she at his/her discretion may conduct an investigation and report as appropriate to the Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny Panel, Governance and Audit Committee or the Head of Paid Service.
- (10) In carrying out any investigation, subject to adherence with the law at all times, the Chief Finance Officer shall be afforded full access to any information held by the Council and may request an interview with any Member or Officer, which request shall not be unreasonably denied. In the course of an investigation, the Chief Finance Officer will log every action taken and where necessary will submit that record to the Governance and Audit Committee.
- (11) The Council's insurances shall extend to all responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer and to all staff engaged on such duties on behalf of the Chief Finance Officer.