

# **Report to Constitution and Members' Services Standing Scrutiny Panel**

**Date of meeting: 30 July 2007**

**Subject:** Review of Protocol on Outside Organisations

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**Committee Secretary:** Z Folley (Ext: 4532)

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## **Recommendation:**

### **To review the attached Protocol on Outside Organisations**

1. The attached protocol was approved by the Council and was designed to regulate the relations between the Council and external partnerships and other outside bodies.
2. Key features of the protocol are:
  - (a) execution of agreements with external bodies to establish the role of Council representatives;
  - (b) clarification of constitutions/trust deeds or other rules under which those organisations operate;
  - (c) institution of reports on an annual basis by Council representatives;
  - (d) advice to Council representatives who may be required to assume responsibilities for those bodies which could conflict with their role as Councillors;
  - (e) advice to Councillors to prevent policy commitments being given inadvertently to such bodies;
  - (f) the use of the protocol to review outside organisations from the point of view of relevance to the Council could be improved;
  - (g) clarification of liability insurance.
3. The protocol has been in operation for 2 years. In summary, the experience has been that:
  - (a) the annual survey of members and organisations has been useful in keeping Council records up to date;
  - (b) annual reporting by members has improved;
  - (c) agreements with outside bodies have been concluded in a number of cases;
  - (d) Councillors have shown greater awareness of possible conflicts of interest with Trusts and similar bodies, in some cases arrangements for representation have been modified;

- (e) provision is made for each Councillor to present oral update reports on outside bodies and this has been utilised on occasions;
  - (f) a mechanism for reviewing and discussing outside bodies has not been fully established;
  - (g) the administration required of the scheme is considerable; and
  - (h) the position on insurance/liabilities of members has been clarified.
4. After two years of operating the protocol, the Panel may wish to review how effective it has been. Further details of the agreements reached, annual report by Councillors and analysis of returns can be provided if the Panel wishes to go into more detail.
  5. Some aspects of the protocol will require amendment in the light of the Council's new code of conduct, including declaration of interests.