

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
ETHICS AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE
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Draft Standards in Partnership Protocol

OPEN	
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APPENDICES	Appendix 1 Standards in Partnerships Protocol

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of a Draft Protocol that has been drafted by Standards for England that encourages high standards of behaviour in partnership working arrangements.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **The Committee is asked to DECIDE: to consider the protocol and make comments accordingly to Standards for England.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Standards for England worked with Manchester City Council to develop a protocol for use by local authorities which would encourage high standards of behaviour in those that worked in partnerships.
- 3.2 The Protocol has not been finalised but was presented to the Annual Assembly of Standards for England in Birmingham in October 2009.
- 3.3 Ethics and Standards Committees are asked to consider the Protocol and feed back comments to Standards for England.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The key aim of the protocol was to develop a shared set of values and behaviours that would underpin partnership work.
- 4.2. The protocol enables partners to agree what behaviour they can expect from each other and given them a means by which to hold each other to account.
- 4.3 The protocol draws on and is consistent with the CIPFA SOLACE Good Governance Framework which was designed to assist authorities in considering how they might go about reviewing their governance arrangements.
- 4.4 The CIPFA SOLACE Framework is made up of 6 core principles.

4.5 To achieve good governance, each authority should be able to demonstrate that it is complying with the core and supporting principles contained in the Framework and should therefore develop and maintain a local code of governance appropriate to its circumstances comprising the requirements for best practice identified within the Framework and the additional guidance. The Framework remains discretionary but is acknowledged as being best practice.

4.5. The expectations in relation to the Ethics and Standards Committee are as follows:

Demonstrates a strong ethical framework and culture: The Committee is required to demonstrate that it is outward facing and works to ensure both its partners and the public have awareness of the local standards framework.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications as a result of considering the draft protocol.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Though any protocol is not likely to have a legal force or be enforceable in law, agreement to such a document in the future would be very helpful in creating the climate for constructive partnership and would inspire confidence in the ethics of public sector partnerships.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

7.1 An equality impact assessment would need to be carried out if the Council decided in the future to adopt a protocol on partnership working.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 Potential issues can arise when different partners work within different cultures. There can be inconsistency in the codes under which partners operate and inconsistency in the way they are enforced.

8.2 Failure to comply with the CAA's requirements in relation to governance may affect future CAA scores.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The draft Protocol is intended as a framework that authorities can adapt to suit specific partnership arrangements. It would form a useful starting point should the Council consider adopting any such protocol in the future.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Standards in partnership Protocol (Standards for England).