

Standards Committee

16 September 2010



Protocol for Local Authority Partnership Working

Report of Colette Longbottom, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform members of a partnership behaviour protocol developed by Standards for England.

Background

2. Standards for England believes that high standards must be at the heart of all local government decision making. Partnership working between local authorities and other agencies (public bodies, the private sector and the voluntary sector) is an important aspect of service delivery. Partners involved in local authority decision making who are not members of an authority are not subject to the same rules governing their behavior as elected or co-opted members on the same bodies.
3. To help address this, Standards for England has developed a partnership behaviour protocol. Standards for England approach involves partners developing a shared set of values and behaviours that they think should underpin their partnership work. A copy of a report prepared by Standards for England in relation to the partnership behaviour protocol is attached as Appendix 1.
4. Standards for England invites local authorities to use the protocol and either adopt it wholly or adapt it to fit their own circumstances. A copy of the template partnership behaviour protocol developed by Standards for England is attached as Appendix 2.
5. The partnership behaviour protocol does not have a statutory basis or have sanctions attached to it. Despite this, Standards for England suggests that Standards Committees could:
 - Act as chief promoters and champions of the partnership behaviour protocol
 - Be well suited to oversee both the implementation of and adherence to the partnership behaviour protocol
 - Play an active role where issues do arise in a partnership, for example one partner challenges another partner about their behaviour in relation to the protocol
 - Mediate between partners where agreement cannot be reached or issues cannot be resolved

Recommendations and Reasons

7. Standards Committee is invited to note the report and authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to take the partnership behaviour protocol to Corporate Management Team for officers to consider when entering partnership agreements or issuing tenders.

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