

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

DATE: **MONDAY, 8 JULY 2013**

REPORT BY: **MONITORING OFFICER**

SUBJECT: **ETHICAL ADVICE ON COLLABORATION**

1.00 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To approve the attached Protocol on how ethical advice will be given in respect of collaboration between authorities.

2.00 **BACKGROUND**

2.01 It is increasingly common for the Councils of North Wales to collaborate with one another on cross regional issues and in order to improve efficiency. The governance arrangements for such collaboration often include joint committees whereby councillors from all of the participating authorities will meet collectively at a “host” authority. That host authority, as well as providing secretariat, also provides legal advice in particular on interests so that councillors receive consistent advice about when and what level of interests to declare. It is important that there is some liaison between those advising the joint committee and the monitoring officers from each of the participating councils.

2.02 The Monitoring Officers of the six Councils have agreed the following simple Protocol to cover such circumstances.

3.00 **CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The process is designed to enable a collective view to be taken of potential interests. This is intended to reduce the possibility for different advice to be given. This process depends upon advice being sought early in order to function most effectively. However, where advice needs to be given without the opportunity for liaison then it is better that the councillor should get some advice rather than none at all so unilateral action is still possible.

3.02 The Protocol can be kept under advice to ensure that it is meeting the needs of those councillors serving on joint committees.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 That the Protocol is approved.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 None as a result of this report.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 Monitoring Officers of the six North Wales Councils.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 Monitoring Officers of the six North Wales Councils.

12.00 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Protocol – The Ethics of Collaboration

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Contact Officer: Gareth Owens
Telephone: 01352 702344
Email: gareth.legal@flintshire.gov.uk