

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22 MARCH 2016

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP REGISTER

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To implement the recommendations from Corporate Business Scrutiny's meeting on 24 November 2015 regarding the Partnership Protocol.

RECOMMENDATION FOR CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY:

that:

(A)	The partnership protocol be replaced by the '<i>Informal partnership working – a quick guide</i>' document.
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1.0 Background

1.1 On 24 November 2015, Corporate Business Scrutiny considered a report on updating the Partnership Protocol and approved recommendations to so. This update, '*Informal partnerships – a quick guide*' is attached at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

2.0 Report

2.1 The partnership protocol was originally produced in 2010 during a time at which East Herts Council was engaged in multiple arrangements with different levels of associated risk. The protocol was designed to help understand and manage those risks corporately. At Corporate Business Scrutiny 24th November 2015 a case was made for reviewing the relevance of the partnership protocol to reflect current arrangements.

2.2 The principle shift in the nature of partnership working over the past six years has been a general drive towards focusing resources on partnerships that provide measurable benefits and outcomes for East Herts Council and residents.

- 2.3 East Herts is now involved in many different partnership arrangements that have a contractual or legal basis and where resources are directed towards specific outcomes and objectives. Examples include shared services with Stevenage Borough Council and large contracts to for waste collection and street cleansing. In each of these cases, proportionate governance and assurance procedures are in place. The Partnership Protocol has therefore become a marginal tool for overall risk management.
- 2.4 However, East Herts is still involved in some informal partnerships (often where there is no legal or written agreement in place). Although these do not require the same level of controls, checks and balances as some of the arrangements referred to in (2.3) the Council does make an investment by dedicating officer time to their support. The Council needs a light touch process in place to capture these arrangements.
- 2.5 Corporate Business Scrutiny recommended that the Protocol be updated with this in mind, that the register of partnerships be replaced with a map of partnerships and that this be reviewed annually as part of the service planning process.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

None.

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