

# **APPENDIX P : Protocol on Overview and Scrutiny Inter-Authority Co-Operation**

## Aim of the Protocol

1. To ensure the Overview and Scrutiny Committees of all Kent local authorities can review issues of community interest effectively and with efficient use of all local authority staff resources.

## Principles

2. All authorities should be supported in considering issues of community well-being wider than the responsibilities of their councils.
3. Authorities should work together to maximise the exchange of information and views, minimise bureaucracy and make best use of the time of Members and Officers of local and other authorities.

## Procedures

4. Authorities should seek to exchange information on programmes and results of reviews.
5. If an Overview and Scrutiny Committee wishes to review an issue in which another authority has a statutory role or in which evidence from the Officers of another authority would be helpful, it should consult with that authority about:
  - the purpose of the review
  - the areas of interest to the other authority
  - the input that can be given by Members or Officers of the other authority
6. Consideration should be given to whether the issue is more appropriately discussed in another forum, for example a joint committee, or whether there is scope for joint action including the co-opting of Members of the other Authority onto the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the purpose of the review.
7. Where a proposal is subject to a public consultation process, scrutiny is most helpful if conducted as part of that process e.g. allowing any findings and recommendations to be available in time to influence the final decision.
8. Subject to such prior consultation, Authorities will seek to respond positively to requests for information or for a Member or Officer to attend meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committees or for information.
9. While it is ultimately for each Authority to decide who it considers the most appropriate persons(s) to speak on its behalf to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, consideration will be given to meeting specific requests.

10. Dates and times of Member and Officer attendance at Overview and Scrutiny meetings should be agreed with them.
11. Each Authority will nominate a contact officer for the operation of these procedures.