

THE EXECUTIVE

14 JUNE 2005

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE STRATEGY

ATTENDANCE AT THE POLICY NETWORK CONFERENCE 2005	FOR INFORMATION	
<p><i>This report informs the Executive of action taken under the provisions of paragraph 2.2 of the Council's Conferences, Visits and Hospitality Rules (Part D of the Constitution), in respect of the approval of attendance at the Policy Network 2005 Conference.</i></p> <p>Summary</p> <p>The Policy Network Conference 2005 is to be held on 15 - 17 June in Edinburgh. This Council has established a leading reputation within the Network and will be sending three delegates to this year's event, at a total approximate cost of £1,536.</p> <p>The Council's Conferences Rules generally require attendance to be approved by the Executive where the total cost is likely to exceed £1,000. However, due to the late finalisation of the arrangements for the event it was not possible to gain the Executive's prior approval.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>The Executive is asked to note that the Director of Corporate Strategy, acting under the provisions of paragraph 2.2 of the Council's Conferences, Visits and Hospitality Rules (Part D of the Constitution) and in consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council, has approved the attendance of Councillor Geddes, the Policy and Review Manager and one Policy and Review Officer at the Policy Network annual conference 2005, to take place between 15-17 June 2005, at a total approximate cost of £1,536 which will be met from existing departmental budgets.</p> <p>Reason</p> <p>Attendance at the Policy Network conference is an opportunity to learn about current issues affecting public sector organisations with a particular emphasis on strategic policy aspects.</p>		
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1. Background

- 1.1 The Policy Network is the UK's leading not-for-profit organisation, formed to support policy and review practice. It is run by practitioners for practitioners, who are elected from the membership. The Policy Network holds an annual conference and summer school in different locations (Universities) every year. This year it is being held in Edinburgh from 15-17 June 2005 at the Heriot-Watt University.

- 1.2 The annual conference and summer school is regarded as the premier UK event for promoting the Policy Networks purpose to maximise the contributions that Policy Professionals can make to the public sector.
- 1.3 Attendance at the Policy Network conference is an opportunity to learn about current issues affecting public sector organisations with a particular emphasis on strategic policy aspects. Speakers are drawn from Senior Public Sector Leaders and Leaders in their fields. It is a good opportunity to hear, speak to and share practice with other policy professionals who are working on similar projects. It is also an ideal opportunity to network with senior policy staff from across the country.

2. Conference Detail

- 2.1 This years' conference is entitled "The long and winding roads" and will cover topics that include:
- The Future of Local Government
 - New Guidance on Comprehensive Performance Assessment
 - Local Area Agreements

This year's speakers include:

- Annie Shepard, Chief Executive of Wallsall Council
 - Kiran Dhillon, Council Relationship manager, New Local Government Network
 - Ian Hickman, Director, Local Government Performance & Improvement, Audit Commission.
- 2.2 The conference is a popular event attracting delegates from a broad span of the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- 2.3 Barking & Dagenham has established a leading reputation with the Network; Graham Farrant spoke at last year's conference and Sandy Hamberger has been elected to the Network's Executive. Councillor Geddes has been asked to lead a workshop at this year's event on Member and Officer Roles for new policy recruits.

3. Cost

- 3.1 The cost per delegate is £412 (after discounts for speakers and members). This includes accommodation and food, but excludes travel costs. The estimated total cost of the three delegates' attendance is:-

Conference & accommodation	1236
Travel	<u>300</u>
	£1,536

- 3.2 These costs will be funded from within existing departmental budgets.