

By: The Head of Audit & Risk

To: Governance & Audit Committee – 4 December 2007

Subject: Governance of Partnerships

Classification: Unrestricted

---

**Summary:** This report provides an update on the work being undertaken on governance of partnerships.

## FOR INFORMATION

---

### INTRODUCTION

1. At the March and June 2007 meetings of this Committee, Members received updates on the work of governance of partnerships. Work has been undertaken in line with the following timetable.

Action	Date
Formal adoption of the Partnership Guidance Document	April 2007
List of major and significant partnerships reported to this Committee	June 2007
Formal 'risk assessment' of the major and significant partnerships carried out in accordance with the Partnership Guidance Document	By August 2007
Audit of governance of partnerships	October 2007
Report outcome of the audit to this Committee	December 2007

### CURRENT STATUS

2. The audit of governance of partnerships has been undertaken as planned and the report is at a draft stage.
3. Registers of major and significant partnerships, per Directorate, were presented to this Committee in June 2007. The audit has confirmed that within the Directorates these registers have been, or are going through, processes to ensure that all relevant partnerships are included. This puts the Authority in a stronger position than previously as all key partnerships are now captured. At the time of the audit the

register for Environment & Regeneration contained some out of date and incomplete information which is now being addressed.

4. We found that Directorates have tended to err on the side of caution and as a result have included partnerships on their registers which do not fit the definition of major or significant as set out in the guidance document. This highlights a lack of understanding of the guidance in some areas and some practical issues with its implementation. Work will be undertaken to ensure this is rectified and this will aid continuous improvement.
5. Despite this the audit found that in general, the governance arrangements in place are considered to be appropriate for the nature of the partnerships, although there are still gaps around the identification and management of risks associated with the partnerships which will need to be addressed.
6. We are currently awaiting formal responses to the draft report and the final report will be reported to the March 2008 meeting of this Committee. We will report the implementation of recommendations in the normal way, such that exceptions will be reported through the follow up process.
7. We feel that we can add value in the future by reviewing in more detail the governance of specific major or significant partnerships in more detail and this will inform our future audit approach of partnership governance.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

8. Members are asked to note the progress made on the work around governance of partnerships, in line with the agreed timetable.

Julie Samson  
Audit Manager  
01622 694569