

Part 4 – codes & protocols

d. protocol on attendance by the Chief Executive and directors at party group meetings

This protocol is based on the conditions of service for Chief Executives which states under the heading 'advice to political groups' that the Chief Executive "shall not be required to advise any political group of the council, either as to the work of the group or as to the work of the council, neither shall they be required to attend any meetings of any political group. This shall be without prejudice to any arrangements to the contrary which may be made in agreement with the Chief Executive (or officers) and which includes adequate safeguards to preserve the political neutrality of the Chief Executive in relation to the affairs of the council".

1. The Chief Executive and directors are employees of the council as a whole and their overriding responsibility is to the council and not to any party political group.
2. The political neutrality of the Chief Executive and directors is to be respected by everyone. They should not be asked to undertake a task which is likely to prejudice that neutrality nor make it difficult for them to serve a different administration at some future date.
3. If the Chief Executive or any of the directors attend a meeting of any party group, they need not inform the leadership of the other parties on the council, nor should they divulge or discuss the content of any discussion with those other parties.
4. The Chief Executive and directors will each ensure that the part which they play in the meeting is consistent with their political neutrality.
5. The Chief Executive and directors will not attend party political group meetings at which there are persons present who are neither elected members nor officials of the authority.
6. The Chief Executive and directors will attend meetings at the beginning of the agenda and will receive reasonable advance notice of the items which the group intends to discuss with them.
7. Attendance by the Chief Executive and directors will not exceed more than one meeting per month.