

## PROTOCOL ON RESPONDING TO EXTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

1.	A consultation should be regarded as any request from the Government, or bodies such as the Local Government Association, professional organisations, etc., for the Council to express an opinion on policy matters. It would, therefore, not include requests for purely technical or factual information.
2.	The presumption should be that, if a response is appropriate all such consultations will be responded to at officer level, apart from those which, in the opinion of the Chief Officer, raise issues of significance for the Borough Council or where members are known to be concerned about a particular issue.
3.	Before reporting to Cabinet on such a matter, the Chief Officer will seek confirmation from the relevant Cabinet Member that the matter should be so reported and whether all members should be made aware that the consultation has been received and where copies of the document can be inspected.
4.	In circumstances where reporting such a matter to the Cabinet would mean that the deadline for comments would be missed, the response should be agreed with the relevant Cabinet Member.