

Protocol in relation to Members' Business Dealings

Report of the Chief Solicitor

1. Introduction

The protocol for Members' business dealings with the Council requires that any Member proposing to enter into a business dealing with the Council should notify the Chief Executive in writing at the earliest opportunity. The Protocol requires that such notifications should be reported to the Standards Committee.

2. Notice given by Councillor G. Miller

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of a notification received from Cllr Graeme Miller by letter dated 25 June 2009. Cllr Miller is the Chief Executive and Managing Director of TWEBLO (Tyne and Wear Education Business Link Organisation), which is a charity with not for profit status and a Company Limited by guarantee.

- 2.2 Cllr Miller has explained the circumstances as follows:-

"TWEBLO until the 31st of March 2009 received its funding as a NGO from the LSC (Learning and Skills Council) to actively promote education, training and work experience/work related learning activity across Tyne and Wear involving all 5 local authorities. This contract has now come to an end and the funding is now passported directly to the 5 local authorities.

It has been agreed by the 5 Tyne and Wear Local Authorities that the current Academic Year August 2008 – July 2009 delivery would continue on the TWEBLO business plan as presented to the LSC and that funds for the April to July 2009 period would be forwarded to TWEBLO for this period to cover activity being delivered to schools.

TWEBLO received a BACS payment notice from Sunderland City Council dated the 23rd of June covering the Sunderland LA amount of £46,806.00 and therefore TWEBLO is now receiving funding from the Council and is delivering a service on behalf of the local authority."

- 2.3 I met with Cllr Miller to discuss the position and he has instructed his staff that all TWEBLO-Sunderland City Council matters will be dealt with by TWEBLO's Operations Manager, Bryan Alderson. This is considered a satisfactory safeguard. In addition, Cllr Miller has given the appropriate notification in the revision of interests form to indicate

there is a contract between his employer and the Council and this is now on the register of interests.

Further Cllr Miller has been reminded that any completed tender forms or similar documents should also include a declaration of his position as a Councillor as well as Chief Executive at TWEBLO, and to be mindful of the need to make any declarations of interest if he is present at any meeting of the Council if the subject of TWEBLO's services to the Council are considered.

Cllr Miller appreciates that he has a prejudicial interest in the contract between TWEBLO and the Council, and is aware of the requirement not to seek to improperly influence any decision in relation to contracts between TWEBLO and the Council.

- 2.4 The Director of Children's Services has been apprised of the situation and agrees that the arrangements can be satisfactorily managed and monitored.

3. Recommendation

The Committee is requested to note the contents of this report.