

Minutes of the meeting of the **Outside Body Review Sub-Committee** held on **19 December 2002** when there were present:-

Cllr T Livings
Cllr G A Mockford
Cllr M G B Starke

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Fowler - Head of Administrative and Member Services
J Bostock - Principal Committee Administrator

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor M G B Starke was appointed Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors T Livings, G A Mockford and M G B Starke each declared a personal interest in the work of the Sub-Committee by virtue of being appointees to Outside Bodies.

3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Sub-Committee noted its Terms of Reference.

4 OUTSIDE BODY REVIEW

Members considered the way forward in the light of the findings of the review of Outside Bodies reported to the meeting of the Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 November.

Reference was made to recent Member training sessions on Partnership Arrangements at which there had been an opportunity for cross-party discussion on Outside Bodies and suggestions pertinent to the review had been made. The Sub-Committee agreed that it would be appropriate to give further consideration to the suggestions.

Suggestion 1 - minimise the number of appointees on each body

The Council could actively identify whether there is a need to have more than one appointee on each body (including statutory bodies,

constitution permitting). This approach could be allied with the introduction of a substitute mechanism to allow for occasions when a main appointee cannot attend meetings.

The Sub-Committee recognised that it would be inappropriate to explore reducing the number of appointees to particular bodies where this would place the Authority at a key voting disadvantage.

Suggestion 2 - Appointees to receive initial briefings on the work of the Outside Body

This could be by an appropriate officer or a representative of the outside body and was considered particularly appropriate where local Authority financial commitment is involved. There could be occasions when a pre-meeting will be necessary prior to the meeting of a body.

Suggestion 3 - Ally the appointment process with Committee membership

There would be merit in a policy whereby Outside Body appointees are, whenever possible, Members of the Policy or Overview and Scrutiny Committee whose work most closely aligned with the activity of the Body.

Such an arrangement would mean appointees are more likely to be cognisant of the Authority's policy on relevant matters. It could also assist the Authority in understanding the work/views of partnership bodies on policy areas.

It could be that the Overview and Scrutiny Committees may wish to consider a mechanism for Members to report back on the work of bodies.

Suggestion 4 - Consider whether Officers can be sole appointees on some Bodies

Notwithstanding that some bodies may require attendance by both Members and Officers, cost benefits could flow where it is possible for Officers to attend on the Council's behalf. Reference was made to the time duplication associated with double attendance. Reference was also made to the value of ensuing there is not duplication of officer attendance. It was recognised that Officer appointees could report back to the Council when decisions are required which are pertinent to Council business/policy.

The Sub-Committee commenced page by page review of the current list of Outside Bodies to ascertain their fit in the context of the above

suggestions. It was accepted that the Authority should retain membership of statutory bodies and that financial support aspects together with the need to be involved in the policy making work of a body were also salient.

In view of time constraint, consideration was initially given to three bodies as follows:-

Body	Observation
Castle Point and Rochford Drug Reference Group (DRG) (currently 2 appointees)	Should retain membership given that is a statutory body receiving financial support. Consideration should be given to reducing representation down to one appointee, subject to Castle Point Borough Council agreeing to same. Appointee should be from Community Policy or Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Consortium of Waste Collection Authorities (currently 6 appointees)	Should retain membership of this body from the policy perspective. Consideration should be given to reducing the number of appointees, subject to this not compromising/reducing the Council's influence.
Local Government Association (LGA) General Assembly/Rural Commission/Urban Commission (currently 1 appointee to each of three parts)	Should retain membership of this body from the policy perspective. Should query the subscription level? Particularly useful to have briefings on the work of the Rural and Urban Commissions.
NCE (Shape) Ltd (currently 1 appointee)	Should consider whether an officer appointment would be appropriate. Should also consider whether the Supporting People legislation could mean membership is no longer necessary with effect from 1 April 2003

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Sub-Committee should be scheduled for 6.00pm on 21 January 2003.

The meeting closed at 6.25pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____