

PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS REPRESENTATION

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises the findings of the Review Committee following visits by representatives from the Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils (RHALC) and the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC).

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 A representative from the RHALC attended the Committee on 13 July 2010 and representatives from EALC attended the Committee on 16 November 2010.

3 DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The RHALC is a district association of the EALC but works independently to provide support for EALC member Councils in the area. Its role is to assist Parish/Town Councils in the performance of their duties and roles and promote and develop the economic, social, cultural and recreational life of local councils.
- 3.2 The RHALC has representatives from all 14 Parish/Town Councils in the District and meets approximately four times a year.
- 3.3 The RHALC appoints representatives to a number of outside bodies such as the London Southend Airport Consultative Committee.
- 3.4 The Members of the Committee were concerned that RHALC, whilst not a decision-making body, was appointing Members to outside bodies. The Committee were unsure how a representative could know the collective stance of all the Parish/Town Councils in the District, when there are only four meetings of the Association per year.
- 3.5 The Committee has established, from its work looking at outside bodies, that one of the reasons for wanting appointees from the local authority is to enable the body to gain advice about Council policy, and for the appointee to be its advocate at Council meetings. It is difficult to see that appointees from the RHALC can fulfil a similar function for a Parish/Town Council, when they are representing more than one Parish/Town Council.
- 3.6 If an outside body requires a Parish/Town representative they should be encouraged to approach the Parish/Town Council direct. This would ensure that the outside body would gain from knowing what the individual Parish/Town Council's policies and plans are, and the Members that are appointed could act with more certainty about the views of the Council they are representing.

Recommendation No 1

It is recommended to the Rochford Hundred Association of Local Councils that they discontinue the practice of appointing members on outside bodies.

Recommendation No 2

It is recommended to the Parish / Town Councils that they appoint their own representatives to the outside bodies that RHALC currently appoint to.