

## OUTSIDE BODY REVIEW

### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report invites Members to consider whether the number of Outside Bodies, on which this Authority serves, should be reviewed.

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This matter was first considered by the former Finance and General Purposes Committee on 12 July 2001, when it was agreed that, it would be appropriate for decisions to be made on Outside Body representation by the new Council, to be appointed for the 2002/03 Municipal Year, and that detail on the activity of the Outside Bodies should be included in the report (Minute 258/01 refers).
- 2.2 Appointments to Outside Bodies is a discretionary function.

### 3 DISCUSSION

- 3.1 Members will recall that, at Annual Council on 14 May 2002, appointments were made to Outside Bodies. Attached at Appendix 1 is a list of the Outside Bodies detailing activity (terms of reference), appointee and, where known, meeting time and frequency.
- 3.2 Historically, appointments to Outside Bodies have been made on a year on year basis, without question as to whether representation on the Body would enhance or improve the service offered by this Authority to Council Tax payers.
- 3.3 At the time of drafting this report there are 60 Outside Bodies to which the Authority may nominate representatives, although not all bodies have representation from this Authority.
- 3.4 At Annual Council on 14 May, all Outside Bodies were appointed to, with the exception of the following: -
- Hullbridge Community Association
  - Roche Care Centre Users Group
  - Rochford Health for All 2000 Action Team
  - Southend Night Shelter for the Homeless
  - Waste Management Advisory Board
  - Youth Arts Partnership
- 3.5 There are also vacancies on the following Bodies, although it should be noted that these Bodies do have more than 1 District Councillor representative: -

- Essex County Youth Service Local strategy Group - 1 Vacancy
- Hockley Community Centre Association - Management Committee - 1 Vacancy
- Local Government Association (LGA) General Assembly - 1 Substitute Vacancy
- LGA Rural Commission - 1 Non Voting Vacancy
- LGA Urban Commission - 1 Non Voting Vacancy
- Southend District Mental Health Association - 1 Vacancy

3.6 It is suggested that Members may wish to review the number of Outside Bodies, on which this Authority is represented. Though not exhaustive, reasons include: -

- There could be a conflict of interest between the Membership of an Outside Body and the Council, particularly where a Member is acting as a trustee, as the first duty of the Member would be to the Trust.
- With the abolition of attendance allowances, Members will only be able to claim travel and subsistence from this Authority (in cases where these are not paid by the Outside Body). At the present time, no appointments attract an attendance allowance from the sponsoring organisation.
- With meetings of Outside Bodies falling at various times of day there could be a clash with District Council Meetings
- Given the recent shift from the 'Old' Committee system to Policy and Overview and Scrutiny Committees, it is anticipated that Members will spend more time working in partnership with other organisations, listening and working with the community etc.
- Members are required to provide regular brief reports for the Members' Bulletin showing the work activity of the Outside Bodies on which they sit. Such reports may be more relevant if the Body concerned is associated with Council activity/interests.

#### **4 SUGGESTED REVIEW CRITERIA**

4.1 The following could form a criteria to be used to identify whether an Outside Body should have a representative from this Authority serving on it: -

- Has the Council given strong financial support to the Outside Body?
- Does the Body either provide a direct service for the Council Tax Payers or are the objectives of the Body closely aligned with the Council's direct interests?
- Is it essential for the Council to be involved in the policy making or management of the Outside Body?

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- Can the body be considered to be a part of the Local Government process?

**5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 A reduction in the number of Outside Bodies could potentially produce budget savings. All travel and subsistence claims are currently paid from the existing budget.

**6 RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**
- (1) whether a review of Outside bodies should be undertaken
  - (2) if (1) above is agreed, whether the criteria set out under paragraph 4.1 should be used for the review
  - (3) that a report be brought back to a future meeting detailing the findings of any review (HAMS)

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**Background Papers:**

Returns from Outside Bodies

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