



CABINET – 2 APRIL 2003

COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the request of Cllr Mrs Robinson, the Corporate & Finance Review Panel on 20 March reviewed the question of the Council's appointments to outside bodies. It was felt appropriate to review this subject at this stage so that any recommendations that might arise could be made to the Cabinet and/or the Council for implementation following the election of Councillors in May.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council appoints representatives to 99 outside bodies/organisations. These are listed in the Council's Year Book, pages 79-93
- 2.2 Cllr Robinson requested the review because of her concern -
- (a) That there should be some "added value" to either this Council or to the organisation concerned, of the Council's representation on that body;
 - (b) That some of the appointments that the Council makes no longer appear to be relevant;
 - (c) That the status of those appointed or nominated to the bodies has not been clear; and
 - (d) That an equitable appointments process should be followed.
- 2.3 Democratic Services have for some time been mindful that the Council's records with regard to representatives on outside bodies are sketchy. An officer has devoted a significant amount of time over the past few months to reviewing the status of the Council's representatives on the various outside bodies, and the varying nature of the organisations to which appointments are made. The task has proven to be a major one that has not yet been completed, and is unlikely to be completed in its entirety by May, but the latest information obtained to date was reported to the Panel on 20 March.
- 2.4 Under the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations, the Council can decide whether appointments to outside bodies should be a function of the Executive, or whether this should be a matter reserved to the Council. This Council's Constitution currently assigns the appointment of representatives to external bodies (other than a Joint Committee) to the Cabinet, and the Panel's recommendations on a number of issues related to the appointments are therefore forwarded for the Cabinet's consideration.

3. CORPORATE & FINANCE REVIEW PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Panel supported Cllr Mrs Robinson's view that the Cabinet and/or the Council should consider setting criteria for deciding the bodies to which appointments should be made.

RECOMMENDATION:

That before making appointments to outside bodies, the appointing body (Council/Cabinet) be satisfied that there will be a discernible benefit to the organisation concerned; to local residents; or to the Council through the Council being represented on the outside body.

- 3.2 The Panel heard that some of the bodies to which the Council makes appointments no longer exist, or have changed their structures so that appointments by the Council are not required. Those bodies that fall into these categories are set out in the recommendation below. The Panel recommends that appointments to these cease.

RECOMMENDATION:

That appointments to the following outside bodies cease:

***Dibden Bay Steering Group
Health for All Core Group
Lymington Harbour Commissioners
Marchwood Junior School Management Committee for Community Use
New Forest District Forum
New Forest East and West Sports Councils
New Milton Youth Centre Management Committee
Poole, Bournemouth, Christchurch and District Post Office Advisory Committee
South East Regional Cultural Consortium
Southampton and South West Hampshire Health Improvement Board
Southern Arts Board
Sweatfords Water Working Group***

- 3.3 A number of appointments are made to Community Associations, but those Associations listed in the recommendation below have no provision for the Council to appoint a member. Members "appointed" by this Council have no powers and can do no more than attend meetings as an ordinary member of the public. No appointment by the Council is necessary to enable local members to attend meetings or to act as a liaison between the Association and the Council if they so wish.

RECOMMENDATION:

That appointments to the following Community Associations cease:

***Fawley and District Community Association
Hythe and Dibden Community Association
Lyndhurst and District Community Association
Totton and Eling Community Association***

- 3.4 Some appointments bring with them only entitlement to attend an annual meeting and, in some cases, to exercise a single vote by virtue of the Council having paid a subscription. Information to date reveals that the following organisations fall into this category:
Hampshire Archives Trust
Hampshire Gardens Trust

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Cabinet considers whether it wishes to continue to make formal appointments to the above outside bodies, and any others that further investigation might show fall into the category of entitlement to attend an annual meeting only; and, if so, whether appointments to all of these bodies should be limited to one member only.

4. THE APPOINTMENTS PROCESS

- 4.1 As stated in paragraph 2.4 above, the Council's Constitution currently provides that outside body appointments are the responsibility of the Cabinet.
- 4.2 The Panel considered Cllr Robinson's view that the current process has not always resulted in the appointment of "the best person for the job". The Panel supports her view that guidelines should be adopted to govern the appointments process, as well as on reporting back on the work of the outside body of the main issues for the Council (if any) arising from that work. The Panel recommends working to guidelines similar to those recently adopted by the Association of Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Authorities, a copy of which is attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.3 The Panel also recommends that the Council's constitution be amended to provide that appointments to outside bodies be made by the Council, and not by the Cabinet.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) ***That guidelines similar to those followed by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Authorities be adopted to govern the appointments process, and for reporting back on the work of outside bodies on which the Council is represented; and***
- (b) ***That the Council's Constitution be amended to provide that appointments to outside bodies become a function of the Council rather than the Cabinet.***

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Background Papers:

Published documents

<p style="text-align: center;">ASSOCIATION OF HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT LOCAL AUTHORITIES</p>
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GUIDELINES FOR REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

- (1) The overall objective must be “the best person for the job” given that the outside bodies generally have work to do which is not political. In considering who is the best person, the need for some reasonable continuity of service on an outside body should be taken into account.
- (2) If (1) is satisfied then the intention should be to achieve both a geographic and political spread amongst Association representatives. The spread should reflect the geography of Hampshire and the political make-up of constituent authorities.
- (3) If a constituent authority has a particular interest in providing a representative on a particular outside body then it should be free to state this to the Association. They will then be given preference in allocation of places if (2) is broadly satisfied.
- (4) Members representing District Councils on the Association should report back to the Association annually on the work of the outside body and the main issues (if any) for the Association arising from the work. Such reports should be brief and might accompany an annual report or other suitable general report on the outside body. The Association will publish these brief reports-back in its annual bulletin.
- (5) Where the Association is represented by more than one member, they should work together to prepare a report back. Where an officer also represents the Association, the officer should normally co-ordinate the report back.