

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY REPORT

REVIEW OF OUTSIDE BODIES

**Report by Governance and Logistics Scrutiny
and Policy Development Panel**

Cabinet Lead: Councillor Jackie Branson

Key Decision: N/A

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the recommendations following the review of outside bodies.

2.0 Recommendation

The Governance and Logistics Scrutiny and Policy Development Panel recommends to the Cabinet that

2.1 All Councillors appointed to an outside body be required to complete a feedback form annually in order to ensure each appointment continues to represent value for the Council; and

2.2 The Guidance Code for Councillors on Outside Organisations contained within the Council's Yearbook is circulated to all Councillors sitting on an outside body as the council's representative.

3.0 Summary

3.1 In July 2014 the Governance and Logistics Cabinet Lead requested that a review of outside bodies be undertaken to establish what value is provided to these organisations, the Council and the local community by appointing Council representatives to sit on outside bodies.

4.0 Subject of Report

4.1 In addition to attending Council Meetings and other constituency work, Councillors are required to sit as representatives of the Council on other organisations and agencies. These organisations and agencies are known as outside bodies. The Council appoints Elected Members to represent it on a range of outside bodies. Such appointments ensure that the Council's interests and therefore citizens of the borough of Havant are represented within key agencies.

- 4.2 The Council recognises the value and contribution outside bodies make to the wider community. Members also welcome the opportunity for the Council to be represented on outside organisations which operate within the borough of Havant.
- 4.3 An “outside body” is an organisation that has a separate governance structure to that of the Council.
- 4.4 At a meeting of the Cabinet on 12 December 2007 the manner in which appointments to outside bodies were made was reviewed. At that meeting it was resolved that appointments, unless indicated otherwise, would be appointed by Cabinet on an annual basis.
- 4.5 Currently the Council appoints to 46 outside bodies, Appendix A to this report sets out the detail of those appointments that are currently made by Cabinet. At the Annual Council meeting various sundry appointments are also made, the current organisations to which these appointments are made are:
- Langstone Harbour Board;
 - Chichester Harbour Conservancy; and
 - Police and Crime Panel.
- 4.6 The Panel was requested, in recognition of the increasing demands on the workloads of members who undertake these additional duties, to conduct a review to rationalise the overall number of appointments made. Through the review it was hoped to ensure that all those external appointments that are made have the most value to both the Council and the organisation concerned.
- 4.7 In order to establish the value provided to both outside bodies and the Council the Panel produced a short survey (attached at Appendix B) which was circulated to all member representatives with a view to establishing whether each appointment continues to represent value for the Council and that the Council’s continued involvement was critical to the organisation achieving its objectives. Feedback on thirty three outside bodies was provided. The feedback received revealed that members identified membership of outside bodies as playing an important role in the Council connecting effectively with the local community. At this stage the Panel did not identify any outside bodies which were obviously ineffective. This would need to be monitored though through the introduction of a reporting framework.
- 4.8 The Panel recognised that the Council currently did not have a reporting framework for members appointed to outside organisations. It is felt that in order to help develop and improve the profile of the work of outside bodies a member feedback system should be implemented. This would help share information about each organisation’s work between members, and also provide the opportunity for all members to ask questions and seek clarification where necessary. The proposed reporting framework requires appointed members to complete an annual report on the work of the organisation they have been appointed to, outlining the benefits to the

Council and the community of the work of the organisation, information on activities and achievements, the number of meetings attended and whether member support should continue to be provided. Once completed these would then be filed and held for members of the Council to view. This approach ensures members have the opportunity to express their views as to the value of the outside organisation. It also enables members to confirm on an annual basis if they have the time to continue to devote to the role or even whether member support should continue to be provided. If the annual consultation with members identifies that the outside body no longer represents value to the Council then a recommendation is made to Cabinet suggesting the organisation is removed from the list and therefore no longer requires representation from the Council. This approach ensures the list of outside bodies is subject to ongoing review and is manageable in terms of the representation requirements.

- 4.9 When a Councillor is appointed to an outside body a letter is sent out to the organisation requesting them to forward on to the Councillor agendas and notes from their last meeting, a programme of meetings, details about the organisation and any other relevant information. It is proposed that a Councillors awareness of what is expected of them if they are appointed to an outside body should be reinforced. Currently the Guidance Code for Councillors on Outside Organisations is available in the Council's Yearbook (Appendix D) and this should be circulated to any Councillors on an outside body.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 Membership of outside bodies was identified as playing an important role in the Council connecting with the local community;
- 5.2 An ongoing review of outside bodies is undertaken to ensure the organisations continue to require representation from the Council. This would be undertaken through the implementation of a feedback form to be completed annually by all Councillors appointed to an outside body (Appendix C).
- 5.3 The Guidance Code for Councillors on Outside Organisations available in the Council's Yearbook should be circulated to all Council representatives (Appendix D).

5.0 Implications

5.1 Resources:

As an approved duty, if members choose to claim subsistence allowance for attendance at meetings, this will be a charge against the Council's budget for which adequate provision has been made.

5.2 Legal:

None arising directly from this report.

5.3 **Strategy:**

It is essential that the Council has an input into the running of such organisations that either provide services to the Borough or use Council resources in order to function.

5.4 **Risks:**

Having no involvement in the way the organisation run, may have an adverse effect on the Council, should criticism arise.

Increasing the amount of meetings that members attend will draw their time resources away from other work.

5.5 **Communications:**

None arising directly from this report.

5.6 **For the Community:**

Sound management of these organisations must be achieved and the Council should ensure that such organisations are carrying out their duties in the best interests of their customers.

6.0 **Consultation**

6.1 The Panel undertook a survey that was circulated to all Councillors.

Appendices:

Appendix A – List of Outside Organisations

Appendix B – Survey

Appendix C – Proposed Councillor Feedback Form

Appendix D – Guidance Code for Councillors on Outside Organisations

Background Papers: None

Agreed and signed off by:

Legal Services: 06/11/2014

Executive Head of Governance & Logistics: 10/11/2014

Financial Services: 07/11/2014

Contact Officer: Tristan Fieldsend
Job Title: Democratic Services Officer
Telephone: 02392 446233
E-Mail: tristan.fieldsend@hotmail.com