
Report to
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

23rd November, 2005

Report of
Councillor Sawdon

Title
Report Back on the Work Of Outside Bodies – West Midlands Local Government Association
Overview and Scrutiny Network

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 At their meeting on 10th May, 2005, the Cabinet approved a process of reporting back to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on the work of those outside bodies to which the City Council appoint representatives. This reports sets out details of the work of West Midlands Local Government Association Overview and Scrutiny Network over the preceding twelve months and details of attendance by the City Council's representatives.

2 Recommendations

In view of the way in which the Network now operates, it is recommended that the City Council should no longer appoint specific representatives to this body, but that instead the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee should continue to authorise Members to attend and report back on each event organised by the Network.

3 Information on Work of Outside Body

- 3.1 The Network was established in the very early days of the new Political Management Arrangements and originally provided a forum for representatives of Local Authorities in the West Midlands area to meet and exchange views and experiences of the Scrutiny process.
- 3.2 Since March 2004 the organisation of the Network has become more formal, with a nominated steering group of Members and officers deciding the annual programme of events. This has meant that events are more focused on specific Scrutiny issues.

4 Benefits to the City Council of the Appointments

- 4.1 Although some of the events held over the past year have been more effective than others, and smaller authorities tend to be represented more than the larger ones, nevertheless the Network provides an opportunity for Members and officers (particularly officers) to exchange experiences and gain ideas for how Scrutiny might be made more effective. It is

the only forum which brings Members and officers together from across the West Midlands region on a regular basis to discuss issues specific to Scrutiny.

4.2 However, given the change in the Network's organisation, it is no longer appropriate to appoint specific representatives. Over the past year the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee have considered the details of each Network event and those Members who have expressed an interest in attending have been authorised to do so. In two cases, only an officer attended.

4.3 It is therefore recommended that this approach continue.

5 Attendance Record and Remuneration for the Appointment

5.1 The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee are currently appointed to this body. There have been four events during the past year, which were attended as follows:-

- 30th November, 2004 Councillor Ridge
Councillor Sawdon
Peter Barnett (Scrutiny Co-ordinator)
- 1st March, 2005 Councillor Clifford
Peter Barnett (Scrutiny Co-ordinator)
- 1st July, 2005 Jonathan Jardine (Scrutiny Co-ordinator)
- 14th October, 2005 Corinne Steele (Scrutiny Co-ordinator)

5.2 There is no remuneration involved.

List of background papers

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Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper	Location
Schedule of City Council Appointments to Outside Bodies	CH61