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**Report to**

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

6<sup>th</sup> February, 2008

**Report of**

Councillor Mrs Griffin

**Title**

Report Back on the Work Of Outside Bodies – Coventry Citizens Advice Bureau Management Board

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**1 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 A process of reporting back to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on the work of those outside bodies appointed to by the City Council is in place. This reports sets out details of the work of Coventry Citizens Advice Bureau over the preceding twelve months and details of attendance by the City Council's representatives.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to nominate one Member to the Coventry Citizens Advice Bureau Management Board.

**3 Information on Work of Outside Body**

- 3.1 Coventry Citizens Advice Bureau is a progressive Bureau, working towards meeting current and future advice needs in the City. Funding streams including the Coventry Teaching Primary Care Trust, the Legal Services Commission, the European Regional Development Fund, ICAS (Department of Health) and from April 2006 the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Financial Inclusion Fund, has meant that the Bureau has been able to provide a wide range of both specialist and generalist services to the communities of Coventry over the previous twelve months.
- 3.2 Funding in its various forms continues to be a high priority for the Bureau, led by the Chair, the Board of Trustees have spent time on short term budget planning and the resulting HR challenges stemming from funding fall out and changes to contracting arrangements. They have also engaged on longer term business planning and a renewal of core objectives supported by National CAB. This work has dovetailed into the work across the City on the new Advice Strategy for Coventry which the Chief Executive has been involved in through her role in the Advice Services Coventry Consortium. In December, the Chief Executive, Sue Darling, gave notice of her intention to retire at the end of March 2008, a recruitment process for a new Chief Executive is underway and the Board should be in a position of making an appointment at the beginning of February.
- 3.3 The Coventry CAB continues to represent the voluntary sector on the Coventry Partnership and on its Equalities and Communities Theme Group; this has enabled the voluntary sector's perspective to be put forward in partnership work with statutory and other partners.

3.4 This year has been a particularly difficult and challenging year with funding streams dropping out, the need to seek new identity for core services and the search for new premises all being issues to be dealt with. Despite these problems the budget is healthier than previous and the Coventry CAB is able to carry on.

#### **4 Benefits to the City Council of the Appointment**

4.1 The Citizens Advice Bureau is one of a number of advice services funded by the City Council; membership of the Board of Trustees ensures that the Council is involved in determining the policy of the bureau and ensures involvement in performance monitoring and management of resources.

#### **5 Attendance Record and Remuneration for the Appointment**

5.1 The Coventry City Council's representative for Coventry Citizens Advice Bureau Management Board is Councillor Mrs Griffin. For the period from December 2006 to November 2007 there have been 8 Board meetings held and Councillor Mrs Griffin attended 5 of the meetings.

5.2 There is no remuneration associated with this appointment.

#### List of background papers

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Schedule of City Council Appointments to Outside Bodies