
Report to

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

, 2009

Report of

Councillor Gazey

Title

Report Back on the Work Of Outside Bodies – Regional Flood Defence Committee (RFDC)

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This reports sets out details of the work of the Regional Flood Defence Committee (RFDC) over the preceding twelve months and details of attendance by the City Council's representatives.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That scrutiny notes the contents of the report and that the Council continues to appoint to this body.

3 Information on Work of Outside Body

- 3.1 The Severn-Trent Regional Flood Defence Committee (RFDC) is a body through which the Environment Agency carry's out its work on flood defence and land drainage. The region is known as either the Severn Trent region (official title) or the Midland region. The boundaries are based around the drainage areas of the rivers and tributaries in the region and this takes the region across the welsh border in parts.
- 3.2 The committee is responsible for preparing an annual, programme of flood defence maintenance and improvement works, determining the necessary funding and obtaining department for environment food and rural affairs (DEFRA) approval, providing and operating flood-warning systems. Much of the work of the RFDC is around the monitoring of both capital works and revenue maintenance costs of the environment Agency's operations in the region.
- 3.3 The total National Budget for National Flood Works is the sum of £830 million, much of which goes on danger spots along the River Severn. Councillor Gazey is pursuing a budget to encourage local authorities to deal with local problems, sewer renovations and maintenance of relevant streams and watercourses.
- 3.4 The RFDC consists of a Chairman appointed by the Secretary of State for DEFRA and representatives appointed by Local Authorities, DEFRA and the Environment Agency with the committee meeting quarterly.

3.5 The City Council paid a local levy £92,750 in 2008/09, a 15% reduction on the previous year. This compares to Birmingham's contribution of £304,759 in 2008/09, a reduction of 15% on the previous year. The local levy enables projects across the region to take place and the allocation of this funding is at the discretion of the RFDC.

4 Benefits to the City Council of the Appointment

4.1 Coventry City Council pays a "levy" to the environment agency each year and membership of this committee is essential to ensure that the authority gets value for money from that contribution. Furthermore with the onset of climate change and the dawn of potentially challenging weather conditions in the future flooding and flood defence will be given increasing importance as an agenda by many different agencies including Coventry City Council. It is also important to note that this appointment represents Solihull on the committee as well as Coventry

5 Attendance Record and Remuneration for the Appointment

5.1 The City Councils representatives on the Regional Flood Defence Committee are Councillors Gazey, and Townshend (from May 2008), and Councillors Ridley and Harrison (to May 2008). In the period from January, 2008 to December, 2008 inclusive Councillor Gazey attended both of the meetings that he was entitled to attend. Councillor Ridley attended one of the two meetings that he was entitled to attend. Councillor Gazey also attended the extra meeting for Local Authority appointees only which was held in September, 2008 to discuss Local Levy setting 2009/10.

5.2 There is no remuneration for the appointment.

List of background papers

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Schedule of City Council Appointment to Outside Bodies