
Report to
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

13 May, 2009

Report of
Councillor Ken Taylor

Title
Report Back on the Work Of Outside Bodies – West Midlands Regional Assembly

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 appointed to by the City Council. This report sets out details of the work of the West Midlands Regional Assembly over the preceding twelve months and details of attendance by the City Council's representatives.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Coventry City Council continues to make appointments to the Regional Assembly if this is required in 2009/10.

3 Information on Work of Outside Body

- 3.1 Currently the West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA) is responsible for developing and co-ordinating a strategic vision for improving the quality of life in the region. The Assembly is responsible for setting priorities and delivering regional strategies. The areas where the Assembly has specific responsibilities range from business and economic development through to social inclusion, and regional planning through to the environment.
- 3.2 The WMRA is also the Regional Planning Body, working closely with the region's local authorities to formulate and deliver a planning strategy that works effectively across the region and it is responsible for the Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 3.3 The Assembly also manages the strategic review of Advantage West Midlands, the regional development agency, co-ordinating the views of the region to inform the policies and work of Advantage West Midlands. In addition the WMRA is a key consultee for national government on regional and national policy issues.
- 3.4 The Treasury Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration has recommended that Regional Assemblies should cease to exist in 2010 with the role of developing an Integrated Strategy for Spatial Planning, Transport and Economic Development passing to Regional Development Agencies and a regional Local Authorities

Leaders' Board. These changes are included in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill currently being considered by parliament and expected to become an Act shortly.

- 3.5 Key activities in 2008/09 for the Assembly have included the development of the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Regional Economic Strategy; the development of a regional Climate Change Action Plan and Biodiversity strategy; and regional transport priorities.
- 3.6 The West Midlands Regional Assembly will be replaced by the West Midlands Local Authorities Leaders' Board and it is intended for this to take place in 2009/10. It is likely to be necessary to appoint members to the West Midlands Regional Assembly during this transitional phase.

4 Benefits to the City Council of the Appointment

- 4.1 As the WMRA has statutory responsibility for a range of regional strategies, particularly regional planning and the review of Advantage West Midlands, it is of significant importance to Coventry that the City Council is represented on the Regional Assembly to contribute to the development of regional policy and strategies, to influence national policy development and the development of the replacement arrangements for the Assembly.

5 Attendance Record and Remuneration for the Appointment

- 5.1 The Coventry City Council's representatives on the West Midlands Regional Assembly are Councillors Taylor and Mutton with Councillors Foster and Duggins as their named alternates. In the period January, 2008 to December, 2008 inclusive there have been 4 meetings held. Councillors Taylor attended 3 of the meetings and Councillors Mutton and Foster each attended 1 of the meetings.
- 5.2 There is no remuneration associated with the appointment.

List of background papers

Proper officer:

Author: Telephone
Councillor Councillor Ken Taylor 024 7683 1000
(Any enquiries should be directed to the above)

Other contributors:
Jenni Venn, Corporate Policy and Research Manager 024 7683 3741
Chief Executive's Directorate

Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper **Location** CH59
Schedule of City Council Appointments to Outside Bodies