
Report to
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

10th June, 2009

Report of
Cabinet Member (Finance, Procurement & Value for Money)

Title
Report Back on the Work Of Outside Bodies – Institute of Community Cohesion

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This reports sets out details of the work of the Community Cohesion Advisory Board over the preceding twelve months and the details of attendance by the City Council's representatives.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The appointment to the Community Cohesion Advisory Board, to which we make the appointment, is being discontinued and therefore there is no need to propose a further appointment.

3 Information on Work of Outside Body

- 3.1 The Institute of Community Cohesion (iCOCO) was established in 2005 to provide a new approach to race, diversity and multiculturalism and its work focused on building positive and harmonious community relations, using applied research to constantly develop practice to build capacity to deal with cohesion issues in agencies and with individuals.
- 3.2 iCOCO is a partnership of academic, statutory and non-governmental bodies, which combines the experience and expertise of four Universities – Coventry, Warwick, DeMontfort and Leicester, with practitioners from a range of diverse backgrounds and professions including Coventry and Leicester City Council.
- 3.3 The Cabinet Member (Finance & Equalities) agreed to allocate £20,000 for the establishment of iCOCO for the initial three years in December 2005.
- 3.4 The iCOCO Advisory Board was established in 2005 to oversee the setting up and development of iCOCO. As a founder member of iCOCO, Coventry City Council has continued to be a member of the Advisory Board.
- 3.5 Since its inception, iCOCO has built up a portfolio of work and established itself as a leading and significant player in practitioner support, research and policy development in relation to community cohesion. iCOCO has become recognised as a national and international centre of expertise on community cohesion, providing research capacity, academic courses, accredited training programmes for public, private and voluntary sectors

and support to all agencies involved in the development of community cohesion policy and practice.

3.6 Now that iCOCO is fully established, there is no longer a need to have an Advisory Board to oversee its development. The iCOCO Advisory Board is therefore being discontinued.

3.7 A National Cohesion Forum is being established for iCOCO which will have the following terms of reference:

- To be an opportunity for leading researchers, policy-makers and practitioners on cohesion to come together.
- To host stimulating debates and discussions on key issues affecting cohesion.
- It would not seek to develop positions or views as a forum but would draw its authority from the calibre of its membership.
- While run by iCOCO, it would not have any relationship to the administration or positioning of iCOCO.

3.8 The Council will continue its working relationship with iCOCO through the Practitioners Network and other distinct projects.

4 Benefits to the City Council of the Appointment

4.1 Coventry City Council is a founder member of the Institute. The aim of the Institute fits with the core values of the Council.

4.2 The Council has benefited from being part of the Institute's Advisory Board because it has profiled the work that Coventry has done at a national level including the '*Celebrating Coventry Campaign*'. iCOCO has also involved Coventry in national research for example the '*Mixed Communities Project*'. Officers of the Council have also been involved in the iCOCO's '*ABC National Diversity Awards*'.

4.3 In addition, iCOCO has supported two Council officers to undertake the Diploma of Community Cohesion at Coventry University. The learning from this will be directly relevant to the duties of the two officers concerned.

4.4 The Council's Regeneration Services Division hosted a visit to Coventry by an American delegation of Housing and Regeneration policy makers organised by the Urban Institute. The City Council's Head of Regeneration took part in the return visit to four cities in the United States organised by iCOCO. This has resulted in an ongoing link with Baltimore to exchanging ideas and experience, and a planned visit to Coventry by the Head of Regeneration and Housing for Portland, Oregon in April this year.

4.5 The Council has recently commissioned iCOCO to carry out a scoping exercise of minority communities and new communities in the City. This has been financed through the £20,000 which the Cabinet Member (Finance & Equalities) approved initially as a subscription to iCOCO in December 2005 and an addition, £17,500 has been allocated from the area based grant towards this project.

5 Attendance Record and Remuneration for the Appointment

5.1 Councillor Foster is the City Council's representative on the Institute of Community Cohesion Advisory Board. In the period March 2008 and February 2009 no meetings of the Advisory Board were held.

5.2 There is no remuneration associated with the appointment.

List of background papers

Proper officer: Surindar Nagra, Equality & Diversity Officer

Author: Telephone: 7683 1003
Councillor Kevin Foster,
(Any enquiries should be directed to the above)

Other contributors:
Jenni Venn, Corporate Policy & Research Manager
Julie Wheeler, Personal Assistant to the Deputy Leader
Carl Pearson, Head of Regeneration

Papers open to Public Inspection

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