
Report to

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

6 January 2010

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 carries 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. The RFDC is linked directly with the Government Environment Agency.
- 3.2 The latest government report, the PITT report, makes it necessary for Local Authority to play a bigger part in flood defence policy, maintenance and work. Consequently there is a re-organisation being carried out by the Environment Agency on how Local Authorities can play the bigger role required. Therefore it is essential we remain an active member.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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 be able to deal with local problems, sewer renovations and maintenance of relevant streams and watercourses.

3.5 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.

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.

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 (to May 2009), and Councillor Harvard (from May, 2009). In the period from December, 2008 to November, 2009 inclusive Councillor Gazey attended all four of the meetings that were held in this period. Councillor Gazey also attended a meeting for Local Authority members only on 15th September, 2009 and supported a workshop held with Local Authority officers on 14th July, 2009. Councillors Harvard and Townshend have not been required to attend.

5.2 There is no remuneration for the appointment.

List of background papers

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Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper	Location
Schedule of City Council Appointment to Outside Bodies	CH60