



Report to
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

6th April 2011

Report of
Councillor Mrs Bigham

Title
Report Back on the Work Of Outside Bodies – The Coventry Law Centre Limited 2010/2011

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report sets out details of the work of **The Coventry Law Centre** over the preceding twelve months and details of attendance by the City Council's representatives.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Coventry City Council should nominate two elected members due to the nature of its work and the level of financial support from the City Council.

3 Information on Work of Outside Body

- 3.1 The Coventry law centre states its purpose as 'To fight social exclusion in communities and to effect change in society by increasing rights awareness and using legal processes to fight poverty, inequality and discrimination.'
- 3.2 The Coventry Law Centre provides legal advice in the areas of Community Care, Disability, Employment, Immigration, Asylum and Debt. Grants received this year enabled Coventry Law Centre to establish a new debt advice service focusing on housing related debt.
- 3.3 During 2009/2010 The Coventry Law centre, 'provided general advice and information to approximately 3,600 callers to advice lines or to the office, 750 people enquired about employment and discrimination, 350 enquired about housing issues, 90 about community care matters and 2,500 regarding immigration and asylum matters.'

In January 2010 the Coventry Law Centre moved to new premises, still in the city centre, adjacent to Job Centre Plus, close to the Citizens Advice Bureau. Sharing with Coventry Cyrenians has helped reduce costs and offers the opportunity to join up services for homeless people.

- 3.4 The Coventry Law Centre produces an Annual Impact Report which is available for public inspection. The report details achievements.
- 3.5 The Director of the Coventry Law Centre is also the Chair of the Equalities and Community Cohesion Theme Group of the Coventry Partnership which complements the work being done by the Law Centre in relation to discrimination.

4 Benefits to the City Council of the Appointment

4.1 Members are able to set the direction for the Centre, are able to scrutinise annual accounts and are responsible for electing the Trustees who make up the Management Committee of the Law Centre.

5 Attendance Record and Remuneration for the Appointment

5.1 Coventry City Council's representatives on the Coventry Law Centre are Councillor Mrs Bigham and Councillor Lapsa. In the period from February, 2010 to January, 2011 inclusive seven Trustee meetings were held, of which Councillor Mrs Bigham attended six. Both Councillor Mrs Bigham and Councillor Lapsa attended the AGM.

5.2 There is no remuneration associated with this appointment.

List of background papers

Proper officer:

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Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper	Location
Schedule of City Council Appointments to outside Bodies	CH60