

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Representation on Organisations
Meeting/Date: Cabinet – 21 June 2018
Executive Portfolio: Executive Leader
Report by: Democratic Services Officer
Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

The Council's representation on a variety of organisations and partnerships has previously been reviewed annually. However, it is proposed to conduct this review to accord with the future electoral cycle for District Councillors. Listed in the attached schedule, Appendix 1, are those organisations/partnerships to which it is proposed that the Council appoints representatives for 2018/19. The first part refers to partnerships and the second part to general external bodies/groups. These appointments are important to ensure the Council is efficient and effective on how it spends time, resources and influences outcomes.

Recommendation(s):

That the Cabinet:

- i. Appoint to the organisations and partnerships referred to in Appendix 1;**
- ii. Agree to not appoint to those organisations and partnerships as indicated in Appendix 1;**
- iii. Consider the comments/recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels contained in paragraph 3.1;**
- iv. Requests that appointed Members report on an annual basis, in writing, to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel; and**
- v. In the event that changes or new appointments are required to the District Council's representation during the course of the four year term, the Corporate Team Manager be delegated, after consultation with the Deputy Executive Leader, to nominate and authorise alternative representatives as necessary.**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 For the Cabinet to make appointments to the organisations/partnerships referred to in Appendix 1.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's representation on a variety of organisations and partnerships has previously been reviewed annually. However, given that all District, Town and Parish Council seats in Huntingdonshire were contested at the same time this year, in accordance with the Huntingdonshire (Electoral Changes) Order 2017, it is proposed that representation will normally only be reviewed within the 4 year period between elections where there is a change of circumstances, a Member resigns, or there is a vacancy on a body.

- 2.2 Therefore, this report will next be reviewed by the Cabinet following the next District, Town and Parish Council elections in 2022.

- 2.3 Listed in Appendix 1 are those organisations and partnerships that the Council appointed representatives to for 2017/18 and those that require appointment to for 2018/19.

- 2.4 For the sake of transparency the list includes those appointments that are the responsibility of the Licensing and Protection Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Customers and Partnerships).

- 2.5 A review of the organisations and partnerships has been undertaken with Senior Officers and amendments made accordingly to the schedule of proposed appointments. Those that the Cabinet are requested to no longer appoint to are indicated as 'Do Not Appoint' on the attached Appendix. However, this does not preclude the Cabinet from deciding to not appoint to other organisations and partnerships.

- 2.6 The number of meetings held each year by these organisations and partnerships varies and in accepting these appointments Members are required to endeavour to attend each meeting, in order to fully represent the Council.

- 2.7 To improve the monitoring of how these organisations and partnerships contribute to the Council and its Corporate Objectives, the Cabinet agreed in 2016 that appointed Members should be required to report on a quarterly basis, in writing, to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel. Due to the varied responses to requests for this information, last year the Cabinet resolved at the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, that appointed Members be required to report on an annual basis. On the understanding that Members could provide updates should any significant issues occur.

There has continued to be some difficulties in obtaining this information which is relected in the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, paragraph 3.1 refers.

- 2.8 It is considered appropriate that when the Cabinet are considering appointments to organisations and partnerships for 2018/19 that these should be mostly serving District Councillors – not Officers or former Councillors.

- 2.9 In the event that changes or new appointments are required to the District Council's representation during the course of the four year term, it is proposed that delegation be given to the Corporate Team Manager, after consultation with

the Deputy Executive Leader, to nominate and authorise alternative representatives as necessary.

3. COMMENTS OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panels (Communities and Environment), (Performance and Customers) and (Economy and Growth) considered the Representatives on External Organisations – Annual Update Report at their meetings on 5 December, 6 December and 12 December 2017 respectively. Collectively the comments and recommendations of the Panels are summarised as follows:

3.1.1 That the Cabinet recommend to external organisations, in the event of a District Council Member with an interest in that particular organisation/partnership, who decides to not stand for re-election or is not successful at re-election, in order to retain the experience, be co-opted onto the organisation/partnership.

3.1.2 That the Cabinet, when appointing representatives to external organisations, maintains the democratic principle of accountability and appoints only serving Members.

3.1.3 Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members recommend that the Cabinet conducts an audit of the representation on external organisations and does not appoint to organisations that either: do not invite the appointed representative to attend meetings; have not met in excess of a year; or the efficient use of resources or influence is deemed questionable by the appointed Council representative.

3.1.4 Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members believe that the Cabinet should make the best use of all 52 District Councillors and appointments made should include non-majority party Members.

3.1.5 Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members request that external organisations should provide a job specification to outline the expectations of Members.

3.1.6 An organisation which the Cabinet has appointed a representative to, that other similar organisations should also have an appointed District Council representative (e.g. BID Huntingdon and St Neots Town Initiative).

3.1.7 Regarding the requirement of representatives on external organisations to report to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels in writing, Members recommend that other methods of providing an update could be utilised (e.g. publicly available reports and minutes).

3.1.8 Overview and Scrutiny Members would like the Cabinet to ensure that appointed Members are aware of the reason for their appointment.

3.1.9 Overview and Scrutiny Members recommend that a Task and Finish Group is formed in order to perform an audit of external organisations and the process of appointments.

3.1.10 The Cabinet should consider the availability of Members to attend meetings of external organisations when appointing representatives.

4. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Appointing to the various organisations and partnerships will contribute to the following elements of the Corporate Plan:
- Enabling communities – to develop stronger and more resilient communities to enable people to help themselves.
 - Delivering Sustainable Growth – to accelerate business growth and investment; support development of infrastructure to enable growth; develop a flexible and skilled local workforce; and improve the supply of new and affordable housing, jobs and community facilities to meet current and future need.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 To ensure that the Council's representation remained appropriate and added value, the Council's Management Team were invited to comment on the list of proposed appointments for 2018/19.
- 5.2 A full review and comprehensive consultation was undertaken with all external organisations in May 2016.

6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Members appointed to represent the Council on any organisations/partnerships are entitled to claim travel and subsistence allowance, which is attributed to the Members Allowances and Support budget.

7. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 7.1 To undertake the annual review of the Council's representation on a variety of organisations and partnerships. To ensure the Council is efficient and effective on how it spends time, resources and influences outcomes.

8. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

- 8.1 Appendix 1 - Representatives on Organisations 2018/19.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

CONTACT OFFICER

Melanie Stimpson, Democratic Services Officer
Tel No. (01480) 388169
Melanie.Stimpson@huntingdonshire.gov.uk