

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## Outside Organisations Sub-Committee

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Date of meeting:	20 April 2011
Report of:	Democratic Services Manager
Title:	Appointments to Outside Organisations 2011-2012

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### **1.0 Report Summary**

The report invites the Sub-Committee to review a number of issues associated with appointments to outside organisations. Recommendations from this meeting will be taken into account at the Sub-Committee's meeting to be held on 19 May 2011 and reported to the Constitution Committee on 2 June 2011.

### **2.0 Recommendation**

#### **2.1** That the Sub-Committee -

- (a) review the list of outside organisations;
- (b) note progress on the identification of Support Officers for each; and
- (c) note the arrangements for making appointments from May 2011.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendation**

#### **3.1** It is important for Cheshire East Council to appoint to outside organisations to ensure that it continues to represent the interests of the Authority and the wider community.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

#### **4.1** Not applicable.

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

#### **5.1** Not applicable.

### **6.0 Policy Implications**

#### **6.1** None identified.

### **7.0 Financial Implications**

#### **7.1** None identified.

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 Whilst membership of outside bodies carries with it the potential for personal liability for elected Members undertaking such roles as ancillary to their status as a Councillor, particularly in respect of trusteeships, Cheshire East Borough Council has already resolved to put in place for elected Members the maximum indemnity which is allowed by law.

## **9.0 Risk Management**

No risks identified other than as referred to in paragraph 8.1 above.

## **10.0 Background**

- 10.1 The main purpose of this meeting is to review the list of outside organisations, taking into account the feedback from Councillors. The attached schedule (Appendix), gives a summary of comments made. The individual feedback forms will be available at the meeting in the event of Members wishing to explore in more detail the comments made.

A survey of Councillors was undertaken between May 2010 and December 2010 to establish the effectiveness and appropriateness of representation.

The survey took into account (a) the number of meetings held each year; (b) the approximate amount of time spent on duties associated with the appointment; (c) hours spent attending meetings/involvement with other duties; and (d) whether the aims were in accordance with the Council's Corporate Plan.

Where an organisation's aims are not in accordance with the Corporate Plan, this does not necessarily preclude appointment. There may be other benefits to the community, and there was an opportunity for Members to identify these.

Members may consider it unnecessary to conduct annual surveys. This survey was carried out when the Council was new and the organisations listed were an amalgam of those to which the predecessor authorities had appointed; it was important, therefore, to establish if representation was still appropriate.

### **10.2 Term of Office**

The former Governance and Constitution Committee had agreed that, wherever possible, the term of office for Members should be in

accordance with the requirements of the organisation itself. This was to accommodate those organisations which had expressed a preference for Member(s) to be appointed for longer than one year in the interests of continuity. It is suggested that for convenience, appointments be made for a 4-year period terminating at the elections in May 2015. Any casual vacancies would be addressed through the revised Casual Vacancies Procedure which the Constitution Committee approved on 24 March 2011.

### 10.3 Officer Support

At its meeting held on 2 March 2011, the Sub-Committee considered that as the provision of Officer support was a commitment in the Guidance for Members, it was imperative that the list of support Officers be finalised before the appointments were made for 2011-2012.

It should be recognised, however, that not all outside organisations have the same level of relevance in respect of the Council's strategic ambitions. In the absence of a "specialist" therefore, it is suggested that the most appropriate Officer as a first point of contact would be a Democratic Services Officer.

The Corporate Management Team has been asked to assist in the identification of named officers for outside organisations, and this information is awaited.

### 10.4 Appointments from May 2011

As discussed at the Constitution Committee *briefing* on 21 March 2011, arrangements have been made for the first meeting of the Sub-Committee (in the new Municipal Year) to be held on **19 May at 2.00 pm in Committee Suite 1 & 2 at Westfields.**

- Following the establishment of the political proportionality of the Council after the elections on 5 May, the Sub-Committee will be appointed at Annual Council on 18 May in accordance with the rules of proportionality.
- The publication date for the agenda is 11 May and as the decision on the membership of the Sub-Committee will not be confirmed until 18 May, the agenda will be issued to the current Members, subject to any changes at the elections on 5 May.
- On or around 11/12 May a list of outside bodies, together with a note of the number of available places for each political group, will be sent to Group Whips. Although political proportionality is not a

requirement when making appointments to outside organisations, in accordance with the procedure previously adopted this will be used as a starting point for the Sub-Committee. To assist in the process, the Sub-Committee may wish to invite Group Whips to the meeting to be held on the 19 May.

- Following the meeting, a report will be prepared for submission to the Constitution Committee.
- On 2 June, the Constitution Committee will make appointments to Category 2 organisations and the relevant Councillors and outside organisations will then be notified.

## **11.0 Access to Information**

The background reports can be inspected by contacting the report Author:

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