

Review of Outside Bodies - Update

Final Decision-Maker	Democracy Committee
Lead Head of Service	Angela Woodhouse – Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Caroline Matthews – Democratic Services Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

The report sets out the progress made on the issues that the Committee had requested further information on. It also provides information on another outside body that has come to light recently.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

That **it be recommended to Council** that:-

1. That the following outside bodies be added to those to be retained but appointed by the relevant Committees as listed:-

Kent and Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board – Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee automatically appointed

Kent Downs AONB Joint Advisory Committee – Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

2. That the following organisation be added to the list of those to be deleted from the Council's list of outside bodies:-

Maidstone MIND

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Democracy Committee	15 November 2017
Council	6 December 2017

Review of Outside Bodies - Update

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 6 September 2017 the Committee considered the results of the Review of Outside Bodies carried out by the Working Group.
- 1.2 Members considered that the outside bodies should be reviewed under the following criterion:-
 1. Is this an appointment to a strategic body and/or is there a statutory requirement?
 2. Does the Council provide funding to this body – is it of a significant level, is a member appointment essential to oversee the funding?
 3. Is there a legal requirement for a council appointment if a charitable trust?

However, there were two outside bodies that Members asked for further information on before making a decision. These were for Maidstone MIND and the Kent Downs AONB Joint Advisory Committee.

Maidstone MIND – the Council does not provide any funding to this organisation and it is not classed as a statutory body. If the Council were to require any work to be undertaken on mental health issues, it would go through Involve so based on the criterion above, the proposal is that this organisation be deleted from the Council's official list of Outside Bodies.

Kent Downs AONB Joint Advisory Committee – the Council has a statutory responsibility under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and this organisation supports that role and receives funding from the Council of £4,138 per annum. Therefore based on the criterion above, the proposal is that this organisation be retained on the Council's official list of Outside Bodies.

In addition a Visiting Member raised his concern that the Mid Kent Downs Countryside Project had recently been advised that their funding of £10,000 had been removed. The Committee requested that the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee be asked to reconsider the funding.

However, when Officers investigated this further, it appeared that the funding mechanism for this organisation did not form part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy report that was taken to the SPS&T Committee. Instead it formed part of the departmental budget under the Head of Planning and Development. After discussions with the Head of Planning and Development it was made clear that this was a discretionary payment and savings had to be made. Therefore there was no scope for this project to be supported any further, other than funding for any small projects that the

Council may request from time to time.

However, Officers have asked the Head of Housing and Community Services (in view of the service level agreements for voluntary organisations under his responsibilities) and the Head of Environment and Public Realm (with open space under her responsibilities) if they would be prepared to submit a budget proposal request. An update on this will be given at the Committee meeting.

This report also provides information relating to an additional outside body that has come to light but does not currently appear on the Council's list of official Outside Bodies but should be considered.

2 AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the outside bodies mentioned above in view of the further information.
- 2.2 The Committee could decide that no action be taken but this could be considered a backward step in view of the Committee's commitment to review the Council's representation on all the outside bodies.

3 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The recommendations reflect the criterion previously applied. Therefore:-
 1. **Kent and Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board** – Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee automatic appointment – there is a statutory requirement to ensure that the Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee represents the Council on regional and national bodies as appropriate. The Board's terms of reference are attached as Appendix A to this report.
 2. **Kent Downs AONB Joint Advisory Committee** – the Council has a statutory responsibility under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and this organisation supports that role and receives funding from the Council of £4,138 per annum.
 3. **Maidstone MIND** – the Council does not provide any funding to this organisation and it is not classed as a statutory body. If the Council were to require any work to be undertaken on mental health issues, it would go through Involve.
 4. **Funding for Mid Kent Downs Countryside Project** – the funding for this did not come from Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee's budget, it came from the Development Control's budget head. The Head of Planning and Development was of the opinion that he could no longer provide funding for a discretionary service in the current economic climate. However, the

Head of Housing and Community Services and the Head of Environment and Public Realm have been asked to consider submitting a budget proposal to fund the project but an update would be given at the Committee meeting.

4 RISK

- 4.1 There is a reputational risk associated with any decision to cease support of an outside body.
-

5 CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The outside bodies have been reviewed by the Outside Bodies Working Group.
-

6 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 If the recommendations are agreed by this Committee and put forward to Council for final implementation then the relevant outside bodies would be contacted and advised of the decision made.
- 6.2 Nominations would also be sought for any vacancies on the outside bodies.
-

7 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The link to corporate priorities should be considered as part of the review of nominations.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Risk Management	Covered in Section 4.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Financial	There are no financial implications arising out of this report.	[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]
Staffing	There are no staffing implications arising out of this report.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Legal	A Councillor who is appointed to an Outside Body acts as a representative of the Council. However, dependent upon the	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance

	nature of the arrangement, it is likely that their main responsibility would be to the organisation to which they have been appointed.	
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no privacy or data protection implications to this decision.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore do not require an equalities impact assessment.	Policy & Information Manager
Crime and Disorder	Not applicable	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Procurement	Not applicable	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance

8 REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

Appendix A: Terms of Reference of Kent and Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None