

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Appointments to Outside Bodies Review Panel

26th April, 2004

Held at 6.30pm in the Old Council Chamber, Town Hall, Reigate

Present: Councillor B.C. Cowle (Chairman); Councillors R.M. Bennett, Mrs. M.P. Brewster, S.A. Kulka* and B.A. Stead.

Officers in Support: Margaret Quine, Head of Corporate Development and Richard Davies, Democratic Services Officer.

20. Minutes

Resolved that the Minutes of the meetings of the Panel held on 24th February, 2004 and 10th March, 2004 be approved as a correct record.

21. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions

None.

22. List of Outside Bodies – Update

The Panel at its previous meeting (Minute 12) had received a Schedule of Outside Bodies arranged in groupings which had included information on the representatives appointed to outside bodies together with the purpose of the organisations, where known. An updated version of the Schedule incorporating replies to queries raised at the previous meeting was considered by the Panel and further details were supplied by the Officers. It was suggested that the responses to the questionnaires received from various outside bodies might provide further information relating to the purpose of those organisations.

Resolved that the revised Schedule of Outside Bodies be noted.

23. Replies to Questionnaires

In accordance with the Panel's previous decisions, questionnaires had been sent to charitable organisations, other selected organisations and representatives who had been appointed by the Council to various outside bodies. Summaries of the replies received were submitted to the Panel and details of responses received after the Agenda had been prepared were circulated at the meeting.

It was noted that the responses received from individual representatives indicated that the duties of a trustee of a charity were not particularly onerous. The trust deeds of each charity specified the number of Council representatives to be appointed and it was understood that any revision to the trust deed would require the organisation concerned to seek a formal change from the Charity Commission. It was suggested

that the Council should give consideration to whether or not it wished to seek any changes to its representation on specific charitable organisations.

Discussion also took place on the summary of responses received from other selected organisations, especially in relation to Officer support and involvement. In particular, the Panel felt that it would be extremely useful for a Council nominee to serve on the core funding organisations.

Consideration was then given to the summary of responses received from individual representatives and the following comments and recommendations were made:-

- Borough Detached Youth Project Committee – this Organisation no longer appeared to function and it was recommended that Council representation on this body be discontinued.
- Redhill Centre for Local and Family History – Management Committee – there were a number of similar organisations throughout the Borough on which the Council was not represented, and it was therefore recommended that Council representation on this Organisation be discontinued.
- Redhill and Surrey Beagles Club – it was recommended that Council representation on this Organisation be discontinued.
- Reigate and Banstead Twinning Association – it was reported that there was no financial input to this Organisation and it was recommended that the appointment of representatives should be discontinued.
- Reigate Priory Museum Society – Executive Committee – it was noted that the Council no longer gave financial support to this Organisation and it was recommended that Council representation be discontinued.
- SCRAPP (Surrey Community Recycling and Play Project) – Management Committee – it was suggested that a request for core funding might be received from this Organisation and the Panel felt that it might be preferable to enter into a proper partnership. Accordingly it was recommended that Council representation on this Organisation be discontinued.
- Surrey Access Forum – the Panel recommended that the Council representative should be the relevant Portfolio Holder or his/her nominee rather than an individual Member specified by name.
- Surrey County Playing Fields Association – it was recommended that the Council representative should be the relevant Portfolio Holder or his/her nominee.
- Surrey County Sports Forum – recommended that the Council representative should be the relevant Portfolio Holder or his/her nominee.
- Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – Management Committee – the Panel recommended that the Council's representation on this Organisation should be reduced to one representative plus a substitute.

- Town Centre Management Steering Groups, Banstead, Horley, Redhill and Reigate – it was assumed that these would ultimately be subsumed into Community Planning, but in the meantime it was felt that there were areas which had not been included in the Steering Groups’ considerations, e.g. issues relating to villages.
- Banstead Association for Community Support – recommended that the Council’s representative should be the relevant Portfolio Holder or his/her nominee.
- East Surrey Community Mediation – recommended that the Council’s representative should be the relevant Portfolio Holder or his/her nominee.
- East Surrey Victims Support – it was recommended that the Council’s representative should be the relevant Portfolio Holder or his/her nominee.
- Police Community Partnership Groups, Banstead, Horley, Redhill & Reigate and Salfords – the Panel asked Officers to try and ascertain the future requirements of these groups.
- Prospect Housing Association – Board Member – recommended that Council representation on this Organisation be discontinued.
- Reigate & Banstead Housing Trust – Board Members – the Panel enquired why the relevant Portfolio Holder was not included as a Trustee.
- Reigate and Banstead Consultation Group for Community Care – recommended that Council representation on this Organisation be discontinued.
- Reigate Quaker Housing Association – recommended that Council representation on this Organisation be discontinued.
- Woodhatch Community Association – Executive Committee – it was noted that representatives were appointed to the Woodhatch Community Association Executive Committee but no similar arrangement seemed to exist for either the Regent Hall or Banstead Centre. The Panel recommended that this aspect should be referred to the Community Centres Best Value Review for consideration.

The Panel gave consideration to the replies to specific questions raised in the questionnaires sent to individual representatives, and in particular discussion took place on whether or not to extend the period of appointment in appropriate cases. Following discussion on this aspect the Panel recommended that the present position should be retained.

Consideration was also given to the question of feedback of information to the Council from outside bodies, and it was felt that some feedback was essential. The Panel recommended that an annual report should be made to the Council either orally or in writing and it was felt that this should not include charitable organisations,

Local Government network organisations or core funding organisations as set out in the Schedule referred to in Minute 22 above.

It was also suggested that where nominations were requested by new Bodies in the future they should be considered in the light of the Council's own priorities.

24. Draft Protocol for Appointments to Outside Bodies

A suggested protocol for the appointment of representatives to Outside Bodies was attached to the Agenda for consideration. The draft had been prepared along the lines of overall guidance rather than as a watertight set of rules. Following discussion the Panel felt that core funding organisations should not be included in the list of categories contained in the draft protocol. Considerable discussion also took place concerning proportionality, and it was explained that many appointments were made under delegated powers where nominations did not exceed the number of vacancies available. After careful consideration, the Panel felt that the reference to proportionality should be deleted. Accordingly it was recommended that the final paragraph of the draft protocol should be amended to read:-

“All other appointments, where there is more than one nomination to the vacancy, shall be made irrespective of political allegiance to ensure that the most suitable person is selected having regard to local knowledge, skills and the attributes of the nominees.”

25. Support to Representatives Appointed to Serve on Outside Bodies

This item had been considered during the discussions in Minute 24 above.

26. Witnesses to be Invited to the Panel

The Panel felt that there was no need for further witnesses to be called.

27. Any Other Business

None.

28. Date of the Next Meeting of the Panel

Details were provided of the dates of forthcoming Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and it was suggested that the Panel should meet in time to draft a report for the Committee meeting to be held on 1st July, 2004. Consequently it was agreed that the next meeting of the Panel should be held on Tuesday, 25th May, 2004 commencing at 6.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 7.55 p.m.