

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Review of Outside Bodies and Organisations Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 22 February 2018 at 6.00 pm

Councillors Present:

C A Cheshire (Chair)

M L Ayling, R G Burgess, R S Fiveash and A Pendlington

Officers Present:

Heather Girling	Democratic Services Officer
Chris Pedlow	Democratic Services Manager

Apologies for Absence:

None

1. Disclosures of Interest & Whipping Declarations

No disclosures or whipping of interests were made.

2. Introduction to the Review and Setting the Scoping Framework and Timescale

Councillor Cheshire welcomed the Panel to the first meeting of the Review of Outside Bodies and Organisations Scrutiny Review and provided some background information.

The purpose of the Panel was to evaluate the current system and to consider how and if, it adds value to the council. There was an acknowledgement regarding various limitations of knowledge surrounding outside organisations, responsibilities and legal implications. Several other authorities had conducted reviews of outside organisations and had streamlined their appointments. It was highlighted that the views of Link Officers, Councillors together with the Outside Organisations themselves would be of paramount importance, resulting in appointments that were beneficial and adding value.

Panel Members discussed the draft scoping framework. It was recognised that the review would not cover the Executive Membership to Outside Bodies as most of these appointments were due to the Executive functions. Additionally the review would not include individual outside organisations' own specific protocols and procedures.

Members acknowledged that 'adding value to the council' needed to be attributed to resource as well as monetary value. Councillor time needed to be used to its best advantage as did financial resources. Further investigation would be carried out on the benefits on attending as a councillor or a resident.

Panel Members discussed the possible approach to be adopted. It would be important to identify a clear picture of the current process in order to highlight any improvements. It was felt that conducting three surveys (Outside Organisations, Councillors and Link Officers) would assist in establishing some fundamental information regarding the current process and whether there was value to the council. As a result of some preparatory work that had been undertaken, draft surveys were circulated to Panel Members and these were reviewed. It was agreed that these surveys would be issued accordingly and witness sessions arranged with two Link Officers.

There was discussion regarding the Panel's reporting arrangements as there was a suggestion to potentially consider recommending maintaining the current outside bodies' nominations for 2017-2018 until July 2018 (along with any vacancies), whereby which the Panel would have hoped to have finished its work. However, Panel Members felt this was not an ideal timescale as additional information was required in advance to support this process. Instead the Panel would aim to report to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission in June 2018, followed by Governance Committee and then Full Council.

RESOLVED

That the draft surveys would be amended and circulated to Panel Members for final comments – deadline Monday 26 February 2018.

That Panel Members would respond with any comments – deadline Thursday 1 March 2018.

That the Chair agreed to issue all Councillors with an introductory email regarding their survey – deadline Thursday 1 March 2018.

That surveys to be issued to Councillors, Link Officers and Outside Organisations – deadline Thursday 15 February 2018 (it was noted Group Meetings occur 13 February 2018).

That the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 28 March 2018 at 6.00pm.

3. Background Information - Legal Implications

Panel Members noted the previous legal implications for Members on Outside Organisations which had been produced in 2014. It was acknowledged that these would require updating as part of the Scrutiny Review.

4. Future Meetings

That the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 28 March 2018 at 6.00pm.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Review of Outside Bodies and Organisations Scrutiny Panel concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.25 pm

C A Cheshire
Chair