
EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

05 JUNE 2008

Present – Councillors Lever (Chairman), Hollick (Vice Chairman), Burrows, Hayes, Hornby (as substitute for Councillor Mistry), Norris, J. Rothwell, Rushton, J. Walsh, White, and Williamson.

Councillor Morris	-	Vision Steering
Group Representative		
Councillor Lord	-	Greater Manchester
Fire and Civil		
Spokesperson		Authority Nominated
		For Bolton Council.
Councillor Spencer	-	Greater Manchester
Police Authority		
		Nominated
Spokesperson for Bolton		Council

Also in attendance

Mr. S. Harriss	-	Chief
Executive		
Mr. M.Kane	-	Chief Executive's
Department		
Mr. J. Addison	-	Scrutiny Support
Manager		

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chadwick and Mistry

Councillor Lever in the Chair

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13th March, 2008, were submitted.

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Resolved – That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

2 EXTRACT FROM PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

An extract of the proceedings of a meeting of the Corporate Strategy and Finance Policy Development Group held on 19th March, 2008, was submitted in respect of the AGMA New Governance Arrangements

Resolved - That such extract be noted.

Attached Reports:

[Extracts from Proceedings](#)

3 REMIT OF COMMITTEE

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which set out the powers and duties of the Committee for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

The Committee discussed the scope of its remit in relation to the work of outside organisations which affected the Borough and accepted that a pragmatic approach would need to be adopted in the interpretation of this part of its remit.

Resolved - That the Committee's remit be noted.

Attached Reports:

[Remit of Committee \(enclosure\)](#)

4 ISSUES IN RELATION TO JOINT AUTHORITIES

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report advising of the appointments made by the Council to the joint authorities together with details of the financial contributions made. The report sought the views of Members as to whether they wished to continue the practice of receiving synopsis reports of any decisions taken by the joint authorities which impacted on Bolton Council.

Resolved – That the Committee continue to receive reports on the issues in relation to joint authorities .

Attached Reports:

5 APPOINTMENTS MADE BY COUNCIL TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Pursuant to minute 34(iii) of the meeting of the Committee held on 13th March, 2008, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report advising Members of the responses received from various outside organisations to reminders sent in regard to questionnaires aimed at obtaining information which would inform Council decisions on appointments to outside bodies.

The report advised that the response to the reminders had been disappointing although, on reflection, the whole exercise had been worthwhile in that the process had enabled the Council to reduce the number of appointments made to and refresh its data base on, outside bodies. The process had also had the added bonus of providing a large amount of information on the aims and objectives of various organisations and would inform a much wider piece of work about to be undertaken in relation to the Council and its partnership arrangements.

Resolved – That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services submit a progress report on the work being undertaken in relation to partnership arrangements to a meeting of the Committee early in 2009.

Attached Reports:

[Appointments Made By Council To Outside Bodies \(enclosure\)](#)

6 GRANTS MADE TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

The Chief executive submitted a report which provided details on the annual Service Level Agreements (SLAs) which the Council had with ten voluntary and community organisations in Bolton

Members were advised that the Council provided financial support to Bolton's voluntary and community sector via three modes of funding ,viz:-

§ Giving – grant funding

§ Investing – support for capacity building and infrastructure

§ Shopping – purchasing/commissioning specific services

The report went on to concentrate on the shopping aspect of this funding mix and provided details on the annual service level agreements (SLAs) that the Council had with the ten of Bolton's voluntary and community sector organisations. These were grants to provide services which were of a Borough wide or general nature. In addition there were other relationships with the voluntary and community sector across other Council Departments who commissioned specific specialised services for the sector.

The Council had one year service level agreements with the following ten voluntary and community sector organisations

- Bolton Citizens' Advice Bureau;
- Octagon Theatre Trust;
- Bolton Community and Voluntary Service;
- Bolton Volunteer Centre;
- Bolton Racial Equality Council;
- Bolton District Victim Support and Witness Service;
- Bolton Shopmobility;
- Bolton Community Transport and Furniture Services;
- Relate Greater Manchester North; and
- Bolton Unemployed Workers Advice Centre.

The SLAs reflected the service provided by each organisation and the revenue funding granted by the Council. A breakdown of the Service Level Agreements with these organisations was appended to the report. Each of the ten organisations were commissioned by the

Council to provide a level of service that was of a strategic or borough-wide nature (as negotiated in each service level agreement) . It was emphasised that the voluntary and community groups did not make bids for this revenue support.

The report went on to detail the amount of the grant aid received in the current financial year by each organisation

Special arrangements had been put in place for Bolton Racial Equality Council (BREC) as this organisation was potentially undergoing a significant change in its focus and there were ongoing discussions between BREC and the Council regarding their future role and direction. The Council had agreed to pay in principle the sum of £42,380 for the period 1st April 2008 to the 31st March 2009 but only the first quarter payment had been agreed subject to the Council being satisfied with the changes that the group was seeking and the services that it would be able to offer.

The Committee then went on to discuss how best it could interact with the ten organisations in order to be assured that the Council was receiving value for money in respect of its grant aid and as to whether performance was being achieved on the service specification contained in the SLA over the 12 month grant period.

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Resolved – That, in the first instance, the Council appointed representatives on the ten organisations be invited to attend future meetings of the Committee to report on the issues raised around value for money and performance against service specification.

Attached Reports:

[Grants Made to Voluntary Organisations \(enclosure\)](#)

7 WORK PROGRAMME OF COMMITTEE

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which provided members with suitable criteria to aid in the selection of topics for scrutiny and outlined possible subjects which could be included in the work programme.

Members views and comments were sought in relation to any further items and issues that they wanted including on the Committee's work programme

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Resolved – (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That the Chairman meet with officers to discuss possible subjects for inclusion in the Committee's work programme.

Attached Reports:

[Work Programme of Committee \(enclosure\)](#)

8 TIME OF MEETINGS

Resolved – That the Committee continue to meet at 2.00pm.

(The meeting started at 2.00pm and ended at 2.45pm)