

Committee: **Governance Committee**

Date: **4 September 2009**

Report By: **Director of Law and Personnel**

Title of Report: **Elected Members on Outside Bodies**

Purpose of Report: **To consider the role of members on outside bodies and the mechanism for reporting back to the Council.**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

To consider the introduction of a mechanism that would require elected members on outside bodies to provide feedback to the Council on any issues or concerns where that information is relevant to the County Council.

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**1. Financial Appraisal**

1.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this proposal.

**2. Background information**

2.1 After the County Council elections every four years, appointments are made to a small number of outside bodies by the Governance Committee. These appointments are generally made for a period of four years during which time, appointed members are expected to attend meetings and actively engage with those organisations as appropriate.

2.2 Members are only indemnified when carrying out functions at the request or approval of the Council. Members appointed to outside bodies formally through the Governance Committee and County Council are covered by the indemnity subject to some restrictions (such as fraud or other deliberate wrongdoing or recklessness on part of the member), but should consider the indemnity provided by any other organisation that they are invited to attend before accepting an invitation.

2.3 Members currently appointed to outside bodies by the County Council are not required to provide formal feedback, although this does happen informally from time to time.

**3. Proposed changes**

3.1 At the County Council meeting of the 21 July, Councillor Tutt asked a written question of Councillor Jones, as Leader of the Council, about the attendance of elected members at meetings of outside bodies. It was agreed that attendance at these meetings would be monitored from now on and a report submitted to the first appropriate meeting of the Governance Committee each year following the annual Council meeting. As a result a request has been sent to all organisations where appointments have been made by the council to ask that this information is recorded and made available.

3.2 As well as attendance information, the Governance Committee are asked to give consideration to the introduction of a mechanism that would require elected members to provide feedback to the Council on any issues or concerns where that information is relevant to the County Council. This information would be used to assess the value of the appointment to the organisation and the County Council and to provide formal feedback of

any risks or concerns that may affect the business of the Council. There would also be an expectation for a Councillor appointed to an outside body to feedback any urgent issues during the course of the year.

3.3 Appendix 1 provides a suggested pro forma that asks a number of questions of elected members who are appointed to outside bodies. The Governance Committee are asked to consider whether that elected members appointed to outside bodies should be required to complete the pro forma annually and are also asked to consider whether this information should be formally reported to the Committee or to an officer of the Council such as the Director of Law and Personnel who would disseminate any relevant information to officers and Councillors as appropriate.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS – The Police and Justice Act 2006

**Members on Outside Bodies****Annual feedback request**

Councillor .....

Organisation .....

Number of possible attendances at meetings .....

Number of required attendances at meetings .....

Number of actual attendances .....

1. What is the nature of the organisation and the main activities
2. In what capacity do you serve on the organisation, ie Director, member of the company, or a charitable trustee?
3. Have you received sufficient training and induction to allow you to fulfil your responsibilities to the organisation effectively?
4. Has the organisation made you aware of its financial position?
5. Do you receive regular reports on the financial position and activities of the organisation?
6. Are you aware of any contracts between the organisation and the County Council or other financial support e.g. grants?
7. Have you been informed of any risks facing the organisation and what steps have been taken to manage them? Please give details
8. During the last year on this organisation – have you identified any issues relating to the work of the Council or otherwise that you think may be of concern? Please give details.
9. Do you consider that your appointment on this organisation is beneficial to the Council and to the Organisation?
10. Do you think that the Council should continue to appoint a Councillor to this organisation in the future?