

CO-OPTED MEMBERSHIP

Report By: Director of Adult and Community Services

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To review representation on the Committee from the Voluntary Sector.

Financial Implications

2. There may be some financial implications arising from claims for travel, subsistence and dependent carer's allowances.

Background

3. Scrutiny Committees have a statutory power to co-opt people who are not Members of the Council to participate in their work. Co-option implies regular attendance at meetings as a matter of course and is only one means of engaging partners and stakeholders. The Council's Standing Orders also provide for the Scrutiny Committees to invite public participation in their meetings and work and receive information, evidence and presentations from internal experts and other witnesses.
4. The former Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Committee last formally reviewed its approach to co-option and user and carer involvement in April 2002. It agreed that two voluntary sector representatives would be invited to meetings as a matter of course with other advice being sought from service users, carers and others as necessary.
5. Regular invitations to attend meetings of the Scrutiny Committee have since that time been extended to Mrs Barbara Millman of Herefordshire Centre of Independent Living and Ms Margaret James of Herefordshire Carers Support as formal voluntary sector representatives. However, it is understood that they are not now empowered to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Voluntary Sector Organisations in Health and Social Care in Herefordshire (the Alliance).
6. The Chairman of this Committee considers that the Committee should review its representation and strengthen its formal links with the Alliance by seeking a co-opted representative from the Voluntary Sector, who is authorised to speak on behalf of the Alliance as a whole. The Alliance's statement of purpose is appended.
7. The Alliance has indicated that it would like to nominate someone from its Board of Directors who would attend meetings of this Committee with a remit to speak on behalf of the Alliance as a whole, with a proviso that the Board can nominate a substitute to attend if the nominated person is for some reason unavailable.
8. In accordance with the Council's constitution any Members co-opted onto this Committee would have the right to speak but not to vote.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Tim Brown, Committee Manager (Scrutiny) on 01432 260239

9. In addition to considering the co-option of a formal representative of the Alliance the Committee then needs to consider whether it wishes to seek any additional representation on the Committee or adhere to its current practice of inviting participation in its work as the nature of its enquiries requires.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT (a) the Committee considers co-opting a formal representative of the Alliance as a whole;

and

(b) the Committee considers whether it wishes to seek any additional co-opted representation or adhere to its practice of inviting participation in its work as the nature of its enquiries requires.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

The Alliance

Voluntary and community, and not for profit organisations working collaboratively for improved health and social care services in Herefordshire

Statement of Purpose

The purposes of the Alliance are to:

- Be a point of contact, forum and voice for the sector on health and social care matters;
- Lead change in introducing standards in sector organisations providing health and social care services; and
- Provide effective mechanisms for the public authorities to work constructively with the sector over health and social care matters.

To achieve these purposes, the Alliance is being funded to fulfil the three principal functions of:

- Influencing the design, commissioning, delivery and development of health and social care services for children, young people and adults;
- Maintaining a register of approved voluntary and community sector and not for profit providers of health and social care services; and
- Effecting good practice in working together between public service agencies and voluntary and community and not for profit organisations, within the framework of the Compact.

The outcomes of the Alliance's work, with others, are planned to be:

- A genuinely joint planning and commissioning process, that is transparent, fair and accountable;
- Voluntary, community and non profit organisations fit for purpose and adding value as service providers; and
- Smoother working relationships between statutory agencies and the sector, based on complementary roles, enhanced understanding and mutual respect.