

## Democracy Committee

**3 November 2015**

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

**Yes**

### Review of Outside Body Vacancies as of October 2015

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Democracy Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Resources
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Tessa Ware, Democratic Services Officer
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	

#### **This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. That the Committee agree to a review of all Outside Bodies with a view to reducing them where necessary and aligning them with the relevant Service Committee.
2. That Committee approves the Councillor nominations to Outside Bodies as detailed in Appendices A to D.
3. That Committee approve Councillor Mrs Parvin as the Nominative Trustee of the Relief in Need Charity and the Brenchley Charity for the coming year.

#### **This report relates to the following corporate priorities:**

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all and Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough – by engaging and communicating with external bodies to deliver strategies and plans.

#### **Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Democracy Committee	3 November 2015

# Review of Outside Body Vacancies as of October 2015

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 At the last meeting of the Democracy Committee on 13 August 2015 the Committee made the following decision:

*"A review of Outside Bodies be carried out by Officers to include a review of:*

- *The role of each Outside Body with unfilled vacancies;*
- *The requirements and expectations of its members for each Outside Body with unfilled vacancies, and;*
- *How to promote these Outside Bodies to encourage nominations.*

*The review to include a list of all Outside Bodies and Councillor members."*

1.2 The following report presents the process, outcomes and recommendations of this review.

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## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 At the meeting of the Democracy Committee on 13 August 2015 a report was presented outlining Councillor Nominations to Outside Bodies.

2.2 After the Committee had made its decision, regarding the nominations presented to them in the report, the following Outside Bodies still had unfilled vacancies:

- Action with Communities in Rural Kent - 2
- Maidstone Area Arts Partnership – 1
- Maidstone-Beauvais Twinning Association – 2
- Maidstone Mediation – 1
- Relate West and Mid Kent – 1
- South East Employers – 1 plus a Deputy

The Committee decided to carry out a review of these Outside Bodies as described in 1.1 above.

2.3 After the meeting the above vacancies were re-advertised via email to all Councillors. The result was as follows:

2.4 **Action with Communities in Rural Kent (AWCRK)** – Is a registered charity which exists to improve the quality of life for local communities and to encourage the development of thriving, diverse and sustainable communities throughout Kent and Medway. AWCRK meets once a year,

usually in September. This organisation had two posts for rural Ward Members to act as observers on behalf of Maidstone Borough Council, both were vacant. Term of office is one year. The Councillor who held one of the posts for 2014/15 was approached after the meeting on 13 August 2015 and agreed to continue. A nomination form is attached as **Appendix A**. This leaves one vacancy.

- 2.5 **Maidstone Area Arts Partnership (MAAP)** – Is a charity which represents and promotes arts and culture in Maidstone and works as a proactive partner in artistic and cultural development. There are three posts, one was vacant. The role is to act as an observer and to report on partnership activities proposed or being undertaken by MBC/MAAP. The post is for one year. Meetings are quarterly with ad hoc working party meetings. The Councillor who held the post for 2014/15 was approached after the meeting on 13 August 2015 and has agreed to continue. A nomination form is attached as **Appendix B**. This will leave no vacancies for this outside body.
- 2.6 **Maidstone-Beauvais Twinning Association** – Has four posts, two are unfilled. The posts are for three years. The role of a Councillor member would be to help increase and maintain links with Beauvais, oversee audited accounts, encourage exchange visits with local groups and attend regular committee meetings and events. These vacancies were advertised again with no further nominations coming forward.
- 2.7 **Maidstone Mediation** – Is a registered charity and voluntary organisation which helps the people of mid Kent who are suffering due to conflict or dispute or the aftermath of crime. There was one post, which is unfilled. The role of a member of Maidstone Mediation is to ensure the organisation is accountable for its work, its integrity and ensure its finances are in good order. The post is for two years. This vacancy was advertised again and a nomination came forward, the form for which is attached as **Appendix C**. This will leave no vacancies for this outside body.
- 2.8 **Relate West and Mid Kent (RWMK)** – Is the UKs largest provider of relationship support. There is one post which is unfilled. The post is for two years. The role of a member of RWMK would be to ensure Maidstone Borough Council is kept informed of the organisations developments and inform RWMK of how they can help meet the Council's objectives. Meetings are once every quarter. This vacancy is still unfilled.
- 2.9 **South East Employers (SEE)** – Provides advice, consultancy, training and networking opportunities for those working in local government. There are two posts, a member and a deputy. Both are unfilled. The role of a member of SEE is to act as the democratic representative for the Council acting as the link between SEE and the Council. The role also involves providing strategic direction for the development, implementation and evaluation of the SEE Business Plan. The posts are for one year. Each year there are three full meetings, including the Annual Meeting and three South East Regional Councils. After re-advertising these vacancies one nomination came forward which is

attached as **Appendix D**. This leaves one vacancy (could be for the member or the deputy member).

2.10 To summarise the above the following vacancies still remain unfilled should the Committee agree with the nominations presented in this report:

- Action with Communities in Rural Kent - 1
- Maidstone Area Arts Partnership – 0
- Maidstone-Beauvais Twinning Association – 2
- Maidstone Mediation – 0
- Relate West and Mid Kent – 1
- South East Employers – 1 - a Deputy

2.11 Since the meeting of this Committee on 13 August a further vacancy became available with Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London Adjudication Joint Committee (PATROL). This was advertised with the other vacancies after the meeting. A nomination came forward and is attached as **Appendix E**.

2.12 In relation to the Relief in Need Charity and the Brenchley Charity a vacancy has arisen because Councillor Mrs Parvin ceased to be a Nominative Trustee of both as she was unable to attend the one meeting of the Trustees for each of these charities during the period of the year. The Committee are asked to approve Councillor Mrs Parvin as the Nominative Trustee for both charities for the coming year.

2.13 The Constitution adopted by the Council on 22 April 2015 makes provision for the Chairman of each Service Committee to take on the role of representative of outside bodies relevant to the terms of reference of their Committee, or delegate it to another member.

2.14 The table below lists the outside bodies mentioned in the Constitution against the relevant committee together with the name of the Councillor currently taking on the role and whether they are a member of the relevant committee:

<b>Service Committee</b>	<b>Outside body named in the Constitution</b>	<b>Current member of outside body</b>	<b>Service Committee Member? (Y/N)</b>
Policy and Resources	Kent Council Leaders	Automatically the Leader – Cllr Mrs Wilson	Yes – Chairman
	Kent Health and Wellbeing Board	Automatically the Leader – Cllr Mrs Wilson	Yes – Chairman
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation	Quality Bus Partnership	Cllr Ash	No
	Transport Users Group	Kent Community Rail Partnership – Cllr English Medway Valley Line Steering Group – Cllrs English and Willis	Yes  Yes No
	Joint Transport Board	Cllr Burton	Yes
Communities, Housing and Environment	Older Persons Forum	Not listed as an outside body	
	Voluntary Action Maidstone	Not listed as an outside body	
	Maidstone Mediation	Cllr English	Yes – as a sub
	Kent Health Overview and Scrutiny	Automatically the Chairman – Cllr Ring	Yes
	Citizens Advice Bureau	Cllr Ring	Yes
Heritage, Culture and Leisure	Town Centre Management Board	Cllr English – until retirement	No
	Maidstone Area Arts Partnership	Cllrs Paterson, Newton and Pickett	Yes

### **3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 3.1 The Committee could do nothing and leave the process for nominating Councillors to outside bodies as it is. This would mean those Councillors already in posts with outside bodies could remain until their term is over and stand down or reapply. However, this could also result in vacancies still being unfilled and the Council not represented on some outside bodies.
- 3.2 The Committee could recommend to Full Council that all outside bodies are linked to a Service Committee. This would mean Committees would assign Committee Members to outside bodies and create links within the

community that relate to the Committee's terms of reference. However, a process would need to be put in place to transition from the current method of assigning Councillors to outside bodies with this revised method. It would also mean changes to the Constitution. Consideration would also need to be given to those Councillors already in post with Outside bodies that are not on the relevant Committee and whose term ends 2018/19.

- 3.3 The Committee could carry out a full review of the Council's outside bodies and apply the criteria set during the last outside bodies review dated 2007/8 (attached as **Appendix F**). This would mean each outside body was fully considered before a decision to withdraw Council support. It would also mean the Council only supported outside bodies that had a link with the Council's strategic objectives. This option could be a lengthy process and may harm relationships with those outside bodies removed as a result of the review.
- 3.4 The Committee could decide to do a combination of options 3.2 and 3.3, where a full review of outside bodies is carried out and membership of those remaining is assigned to the relevant service committee. Depending on the outcome of a full review, this could result in the Council only supporting outside bodies with links to the strategic objectives, which in turn should result in membership of the remaining outside bodies being more effective. This option could be a lengthy process and may harm relationships with those outside bodies removed as a result of the review.
- 3.5 The Committee could decide not to appoint Councillor Mrs Parvin as the Nominative Trustee for both the Relief in Need Charity and the Brenchley Charity. However, this would mean advertising these posts to all Councillors, which would delay the appointment of a member representative on these outside bodies.

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#### **4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 The preferred option would be option 3.4 and 3.5. The last review of outside bodies was carried out during 2007/8, almost 8 years ago. The Council's strategic direction, Governance structure and Constitution has changed since then and the Council is always looking for ways to be more cost effective.
- 4.2 A review would also provide an opportunity to consider the criteria for outside bodies from the 2007/8 review and decide if it is still relevant.
- 4.3 The review could be a two way process and provide an opportunity for outside bodies to evaluate the effectiveness of Council member appointments to their organisation.
- 4.4 By linking outside bodies to Service Committees there would be more automatic appointments which should reduce officer time in administering the nomination process.
- 4.5 The review could consider the number of appointments for each outside body as well as the length of term of membership which could align

memberships with Councillor elections and changes to Service Committee membership.

## 5. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 Each existing outside body will need to be asked to provide up to date information on their strategies and objectives and their expectations of members who are nominated, together with their views on how useful Councillor membership is to their organisation.
- 5.2 Existing outside body members will be asked for information on how effective they feel membership of the outside body is and what the benefits are to Maidstone Borough Council.
- 5.3 Once this information is available the Committee can review the information provided against the criteria set out in the review from 2007/8 or devise their own criteria.
- 5.4 Once all this is completed the Committee can decide whether to retain, reduce appointments or remove an outside body.
- 5.5 A full list of current outside bodies is attached at **Appendix G** showing details of the number of appointments to each outside body, the length of each appointment, current membership and the number of current vacancies.

## 6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>		[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Risk Management</b>		[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Financial</b>		[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]
<b>Staffing</b>		[Head of Service]
<b>Legal</b>	The legal implications are as set out within the body of the report.	Team Leader Corporate Governance
<b>Equality Impact Needs Assessment</b>	None identified	Policy & Information Officer – Clare Wood

<b>Environmental/Sustainable Development</b>		[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Community Safety</b>		[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Human Rights Act</b>		[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Procurement</b>		[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]
<b>Asset Management</b>		[Head of Service & Manager]

## **7. REPORT APPENDICES**

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Nomination form for Action with Communities in Rural Kent
  - Appendix B: Nomination form for Maidstone Area Arts Partnership
  - Appendix C: Nomination form for Maidstone Mediation
  - Appendix D: Nomination form for South East Employers
  - Appendix E: Nomination form for PATROL
  - Appendix F: Review of Outside Bodies 2007/8
  - Appendix G: Full list of outside bodies as at 12 October 2015
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