

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet
AUTHOR: Finance and Resources Director

8 June 2006

APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY GROUPS

Purpose

1. To consider the appointment of advisory groups for 2006/07 and agree membership in accordance with nominations from the groups.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2. Quality, Accessible Services	Advisory groups can help to ensure the provision of quality accessible services
Village Life	
Sustainability	
Partnership	

Background

3. The Constitution provides that the executive may establish advisory groups to inform its decisions and assist it in the discharge of its functions, whether by Cabinet as a whole or by a portfolio holder. Advisory groups should not normally exceed 9 elected members and the relevant portfolio holder is additional to that number. See pages G-4 and G-5 of the Constitution for details.
4. A number of advisory groups have been established over recent years, some on-going, some time limited. Members have, to date, been appointed solely on the basis of interest and experience. Advisory groups must now be politically balanced and political groups will be asked to make nominations.
5. Cabinet on 25 May re-appointed the Community, Arts and Sports Advisory Group and the Northstowe Trust Development Group, both expected to be time limited.

Considerations

6. Cabinet is invited to consider the advisory groups to be appointed/re-appointed for the coming year, the sizes of the groups and membership. In confirming membership, Cabinet may wish to indicate whether it is appropriate for portfolio holders to sit as ordinary members of advisory groups (i.e. other than the portfolio holder to whom the group is making recommendations).
7. The current groups are:

Conservation Advisory Group – 17 members
Meets on a 6 weekly cycle

Housing for Older People Advisory Group – 9 members

Last met formally in September 2005 but a presentation was made to the Group, open to all members, in April this year.

ICT Advisory Group – 8 members

Last met formally in September 2005

Land Drainage Advisory Group – 9 members

Meets as and when needed

Member Training Advisory Group – 6 members

Last met in September 2005

Milton Country Park Advisory Group – 7 members

Normally meets about 3 times a year

Northstowe Member Steering Group – 25 members

Last met in September 2004. Appointed as the enlarged group in 2005 but has not yet been required to meet.

Planning Policy Advisory Group – 10 members plus the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Development and Conservation Control Committee

Last met formally in July 2005. Is sometimes used as the basis for invitations to presentations on planning issues.

Waste Management Advisory Group – 14 members

Meets as and when needed. Last met in July 2005.

Climate Change Group

Currently this is an informal group of interested members, serviced only by the Strategic Development Officer.

Options

8. Cabinet may decide that some of these groups are no longer required and/or that new groups are needed.

Financial Implications

9. None significant

Legal Implications

10. Advisory groups have no decision making powers. They may only make recommendations to the executive.
11. A portfolio holder sitting as an ordinary member of an advisory group may be required to declare an interest and take no part in discussions if its recommendations are submitted to Cabinet, a restriction similar to that for members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

Staffing Implications

12. Advisory groups need to be serviced.

Risk Management Implications

13. Decisions made with the support of a spread of non-executive members are less likely to be challenged.

Conclusions/Summary

14. Cabinet should determine what advisory groups are appropriate, what their sizes should be and appoint members as nominated by the political groups.

Background Papers: None unpublished

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