

report

meeting	Administration Committee		
date	1 December 2004	agenda item number	9 (b)

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR REGENERATION, LEARNING, SKILLS and EMPLOYMENT

LATCF (Leading Action for Textiles, Clothing & Footwear

PURPOSE

To report details of an appointment to an external organisation, together with the associated travel requirements.

INFORMATION AND ADVICE

1. LATCF is one of four associations which comprise the Alliance for Regional Aid (AfRA). The others are the Coalfield Communities Campaign, the European Industrial Regions Association (EIRA) and Steel Action. Together, they represent 140 local authorities across Britain, including almost all traditional industrial areas. The work of AfRA is directed by a Steering Group which comprises the chairs of the four associations that comprise the Alliance.
2. The County Council's representative on LATCF is currently Councillor Chris Winterton. On 1 July 2004, he was elected (for a one year period), to the position of chair. This will involve representative, policy-making and lobbying duties. It also means that he becomes a member of the Alliance for Regional Aid (AfRA) Steering Group.
3. This Steering Group directs policy and lobbies on behalf of the Alliance. It meets approximately four times a year within Great Britain to consider Alliance business, with one meeting being held in Nottinghamshire. In addition, depending upon current policy and lobbying priorities, the Group meets with government ministers in London to press the Alliance position on regional policy matters approximately twice a year.

4. As Councillor Winterton's membership of the AfRA Steering Group arises from his election as Chair of LATCF, it is necessary for the County Council to consider the expenses involved.
5. LATCF seeks an inclusive local authority membership and because of that keeps its subscriptions low (eg. The County Council pays £1,700 per annum for its membership of LATCF, compared with £13,058 for its membership of the Coalfield Communities Campaign). Because of this LATCF has an extremely limited operating budget and is not in a position to fund the expenses those local authority members holding office. It is usual practice for those expenses to be met by the local authority of the appointed members.
6. During his year of office, Councillor Winterton can be expected to attend 4 Steering Group meetings, one of which will be held in Nottinghamshire and participate in 3 Steering Group meetings with Government Ministers. The meeting in Nottinghamshire will involve the provision of hospitality at an estimated cost of £150.

Statutory and Policy Implications

- a) Appointments to Outside Bodies – there are a range of benefits to the County Council arising from Councillor Winterton's election to Chair of the organisation to which he has been appointed previously. These are particularly related to the resultant place on the AfRA Steering Group, where he will be able to bring a Nottinghamshire perspective to the discussions/policies, ensuring that the economies of areas like the County benefit from and influence national and European economic policy.
- b) Members' Allowances – as Committee knows, Members are appointed to a range of external organisations whose meetings are held outside Nottinghamshire. Under the Members' Allowances Scheme, travel and subsistence allowances may be claimed for attendance at a meeting of any outside body, external or partnership organisation where the appointment or nomination was made by the Council, Cabinet or this Committee. If the County Council had made a direct appointment to the Steering Group, the travel and allowances positions would be covered by the Scheme.
- c) Travel and Accommodation Policy – the policy requires that travel away from Nottinghamshire is approved in advance by this Committee. However, the Members' Allowances Scheme also permits travel to meetings as described in b) above; visits and duties within the UK for up to 72 hours in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions by Cabinet members, amongst others.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Committee note the election of Councillor Winterton as Chair of LATCF until 30 June 2004 and his consequent appointment as a member of the AfRA Steering Group for the same period.
2. That the Committee decides whether to approve membership of the AfRA Steering Group for the payment of travel and subsistence allowances for the period expiring on 30 June 2004.
3. That approval be given for one meeting of the LATCF Steering Group to be hosted by the County Council, subject to the cost being met from the Regeneration Portfolio.

Michael Burrows
Director of Culture and Community

Legal Services' Comments (JA 23.11.04)

The above matters fall within the delegations to the Administration Committee. The Council has powers under the Local Government Act 2000 to do anything likely to improve the economic, social or environmental well being of its area or of people within its area. The Council lists amongst its priorities, culture, environment and the community. The Committee must be satisfied that the proposals and recommendations in this report fall within the provisions of the statutory power and will improve the economic, social or environmental well being of the area and in doing so the Committee must have regard to the matters set out in the Council's Community Strategy.

Director of Resources' Financial Comments (R/MB)

The estimated cost of one member attending the LATCF Steering Group Meetings is £960. The cost of attending the AfRA Steering Group is £330. This can be met from the 2004/05 budget for Economic Development. In 2005/06, it is anticipated that budget provision will be transferred to the Chief Executive's department.