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| Council Meeting | |
| Meeting Date | 15 November 2023 |
| Report Title | Appointment to Outside Body – The Meads Woodland Group |
| EMT Lead | Lisa Fillery – Director of Resources |
| Head of Service | |
| Lead Officer | Jo Millard – Democratic and Electoral Services Manager |
| Classification | Open |
| Recommendations | 1. The Council is asked to agree a Borough Council nomination to The Meads Woodland Group. |

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the Annual Council meeting held on 17 May 2023, the Council made appointments to outside bodies, trusts and statutory bodies. At that time, The Meads Woodland Group was on the schedule, but the group was not yet fully established and no nominations were made.
- 1.2 Since then, the relevant information has been sought and received. The nomination period is for 4 years. As discussed at the Western Area Committee, Councillor James Hunt (The Meads Ward Member) joined the Group on an informal basis in October 2022. This report seeks to formalise the representative from Swale Borough Council.

2 Background

- 2.1 By way of background, the protocol agreed by Council on 23 February 2011 set out the following guiding principles as to whether or not appointments should be made. They are:

Essential:-

- Representation is still required – will be reviewed annually
- Appointee's role is clearly defined and does not duplicate existing arrangements
- Aims and objectives of the Outside Body (OB) are compatible with the Council's
- OB must have Terms of Reference, Constitution, Written agreement, Trust Deed or Memo and Articles, Audited accounts
- OB indemnifies appointed member and adequate insurance cover is arranged by organisation
- Appointment required by virtue of a statutory duty or other legal requirement;
- Appointment required by virtue of a specific decision or policy adopted by the Council;

- Any costs of attendance can be met within resources available to the Authority

Additional considerations:-

- Appointment will improve the Council's working relationships with outside bodies
- Appointment deriving from the Council's community leadership/consultative role or enhances the Council's Community Leadership role
- Organisation set up by the Council
- To ensure that the authority is in a position to influence sub-regional strategic decisions
- Capacity building – where interests, expertise or specific skills or knowledge are required – two way process
- Time commitments must be proportionate to the Council's objectives
- Equality of access to Councillors' time
- Expenses covered by external organisation (save from VCS)

2.2 Members may wish to think seriously before being nominated as a trustee or director by the Council, with regard to the legal obligations that this imposes on the appointee. Attention is drawn to the information below:

2.3 **Constitution position** – the appointment process within the Constitution follows certain principles. It is split between (a) those bodies to which the Council appoints as a body corporate e.g. charities and trusts and which fulfil primarily council functions and (b) those which do not require 'body corporate' appointment and are more closely linked to the exercise of executive functions e.g. partnerships.

2.4 **Register of Interests** - Members are required to record any changes to their interests arising from their appointment to an outside body.

3 Proposals

3.1 The Council is asked to make a nomination to The Meads Woodland Group for a 4-year period, up to October 2026.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 Council could decide whether or not to make a nomination to this outside body. Consideration should be given to the principles already agreed in the Outside Bodies Protocol adopted by full Council on 23 February 2011.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 The proposals in this report follow consultation with Group Leaders.

6 Implications

| Issue | Implications |
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| Corporate Plan | Nominations to outside bodies contribute to the council priority to renew local democracy and make the council fit for the future |
| Financial, Resource and Property | The cost of servicing the Council's committees will be met within existing budgets. The establishment of any additional Committee dates would have financial and human resource implications. |
| Legal, Statutory and Procurement | <p>Nominations to some outside bodies are as trustees and/or directors, which carries specific legal responsibilities and liabilities for the individual member.</p> <p>To ensure compliance with the Members' Code of Conduct any member taking up a position on an outside body must review the interests declared in their register of interests within 28 days of the position becoming effective.</p> |
| Crime and Disorder | None identified at this stage. |
| Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency | None identified at this stage. |
| Health and Wellbeing | None identified at this stage. |
| Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults | None identified at this stage. |
| Risk Management and Health and Safety | None identified at this stage. |
| Equality and Diversity | None identified at this stage. |
| Privacy and Data Protection | None identified at this stage |

7 Appendices

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

None.

8 Background Papers

None.