

THE EXECUTIVE

8 APRIL 2003

JOINT REPORT OF THE BOROUGH OFFICER FOR DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT AND LEGAL SERVICES AND THE BOROUGH PERSONNEL OFFICER

EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES - MEMBERS AND OFFICERS		FOR DECISION
<p><i>This report is submitted to the Executive at the request of the Chief Executive.</i></p> <p>This report sets out the known current position of external activities undertaken by Members and Senior Officers, and the benefits to the Council as far as the individuals involved are concerned. This work has been undertaken as a result of a recommendation from the Corporate Performance Assessment.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>The Executive is asked to support all Members and senior managers in participating in external activities to benefit the Council and the Borough.</p>		
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1. **Background**

The Audit Commission reported on the Corporate Assessment (CPA) on Barking and Dagenham Council in December 2002 and commented that:

"Officers are beginning to look more widely at different ways of doing things from more successful authorities. Until recently much of this was limited to neighbouring east London councils. This is now beginning to be much more focussed on London wide and some national comparators. However, councillors, even at a senior level are still very inwardly focussed and rarely obtain a round external perspective".

2. **Current Postion**

2.1 Members and Senior Officers have been asked to provide a list of external professional activities and how they benefit the Council. These are attached as appendices to this report. Despite two reminders some responses are still outstanding. Where no response has been received, despite three reminders, we have answered that there are none.

- 2.2 When the list of agreed representation on external bodies was provided to Members to assist them, it seems that some were not aware of their nomination, although they were agreed by the Executive and the Assembly and recorded in the minutes. In addition, some had never been provided with any papers although, until this point this issue had not been raised with Members Services or Democratic and Electoral Services.
- 2.3 Members and TMT previously agreed that, to maximise the Council's membership on outside bodies and use this as a vehicle to raise the Council's profile, it is necessary to identify a core list of key policy committees on which to focus and to ensure rigorous briefing/debriefing and support arrangements for these meetings. Clearly, the Association of London Government (ALG) and Local Government Association (LGA) committees are pivotal. Chief Officers were provided with guidelines in October 2002 on briefing Members on outside bodies and the criteria for reporting back through the Executive. Despite being reminded, there has still not been a full response identifying the key areas and this needs to be addressed before procedures can be introduced. Any Members experiencing problems in achieving this should contact either the relevant Chief Officer, or Pauline Bonella (Members Services Manager).

Background Papers

None.