

SUMMARY OF PROTOCOL FOR THE CO-OPTION OF NON-VOTING SCRUTINY MEMBERS

1. The number of Non-Voting Co-optees on each Scrutiny Committee will not exceed 6.
2. Advertisements will be placed in the Council's "Countywide" newspaper, the Council website and Council Offices. In addition posters will be displayed in public places including libraries, parish council offices, schools, leisure centres with a press release issued to all local media (via Press Office).
3. Non-Voting Co-opted Member role description and person specification will be available to send to interested applicants for use by the Overview and Scrutiny Members during the appointment process.
 - The Non-Voting Co-opted Member role description will include the following requirements:
 - Regularly attend formal Scrutiny meetings.
 - Take part in in-depth 'Cross Cutting, Scrutiny reviews - meetings for this type of review may be held in the evening or daytime and could involve site visits, focus groups and other types of meeting. This type of review could involve up to 8-12 meetings over an extended period of time.
 - Participate in 'Light Touch' Scrutiny Reviews – meetings for this type of review may involve site visits, focus groups and other types of meeting. This type of review could involve up to 2-5 meetings over a 4/8 week period.
 - Play an active part in meetings - asking questions, giving your views and suggesting improvements.
 - Bring an external view to Scrutiny work, which Councillors might not have, and represent the views of the residents of County Durham.
 - Suggest service areas or issues that Scrutiny Committees could investigate.
 - Treat witnesses with courtesy and respect the confidentiality of some of the information you might hear as a Scrutiny Member.
 - Remain non-political at all times.
 - The person specification will include the following requirements :
 - A keen and genuine interest in achieving improvements in public services for local people.

- Experience relating to the remit of the Scrutiny Committee you wish to sit on. This could have been gained through your own experience of using Council services in that area, through voluntary work or from being employed in a similar line of work.
 - The ability to understand written and verbal information, to not take information at face value and use it to think of further questions.
 - Willing to contribute to discussions, sometimes in public meetings, by giving your views and asking questions, including on issues which might be outside your area of interest or expertise.
 - The ability to ask questions and give views that reflect the interests and views of people other than yourself.
 - A respect for the views of others and the ability to consider issues in a fair and non-judgmental way.
 - The ability to work as part of a team and develop good working relationships with people from different backgrounds.
 - Independent of party politics including not having been a member of the Council in the past two years.
 - The ability to problem-solve and look at innovative new ways of working that will achieve improvements in services.
 - Willingness to attend training to develop your knowledge and skills.
 - Resides, works, or is a member of an organisation within County Durham.
 - An awareness and understanding of Equality and Diversity issues (successful applicants will attend the Equality and Diversity training provided by the Authority)
4. Each Non-Voting Co-optee will be subject to a formal appointment process which will consist of the following:
- The completion of the appropriate application form by all applicants.
 - A formal interview with specific Overview and Scrutiny Members (including a member representative from a minority group).
 - A support programme for all Non-Voting Co-optees which will include induction and relevant training.
5. Except for the 5 Statutory appointed Co-opted Members serving on the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee who have voting rights for Educational matters only Co-opted Members will not have voting rights.
6. The existing Non-Voting Co-optees will continue to serve in 2009, with the formalised appointment process commencing in January 2010.

7. Each Non-Voting Co-opted member will be appointed for a period of two Years (2010-2012). At the end of the two year period they will be given the opportunity to apply for a further period of service as a Co-optee, however they will be subject to the formal appointment process which will include the following:
 - Completion of an “expression of interest form” following which they will be requested to complete a “full application form”.
 - A formal interview process with Overview and Scrutiny members lasting for approximately 20 minutes (minority group representative involved in this process).
 - If re-appointed as a Non-Voting Co-optee, an induction interview will be arranged with the appropriate Chairman/Vice-Chairman and the appropriate Scrutiny officer.
8. In addition to standing Non-Voting Co-optees, review groups can Co-opt individuals with expert knowledge onto a review panel for the duration of the review.
9. The process governing the appointment of Non-Voting Co-optees will commence in January 2010 to ensure that Co-optees are in place for the new municipal year.
10. Each Non-voting Co-opted Member will have an individual induction once they are appointed before attending their first Scrutiny meeting.
11. The same Scrutiny Training opportunities will be made available to Non-Voting Co-optees as are available to elected members; this includes both in-house and external training.
12. Each Non-Voting Co-opted Member will have the opportunity for a review meeting during each municipal year. This will provide an opportunity to discuss performance, training and support needs and any other issues.
13. The position of Non-Voting Co-opted Member is a voluntary post however the Council will make payments to Non-Voting Co-opted Members to cover expenses incurred whilst fulfilling their duties as a Co-opted Member (travelling and subsistence allowances).
14. Non-Voting Co-opted Members will be expected to abide by the Members Code of Conduct during their period of office and to sign the appropriate undertaking..