

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

9 February 2009



Protocol for the Co-option of Non-Voting Scrutiny Members

Report of Feisal Jassat, Head of Overview and Scrutiny

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide members with a draft protocol for the appointment of Non-Voting Co-optees to serve on the various Overview and Scrutiny Committees for a period of 2 years (2010-2012).
- 2 To formalise the procedure used by Overview and Scrutiny for the appointment of Non-Voting Co-optees whilst engaging as many of the Overview and Scrutiny Members in the process as is practical.
- 3 The need to develop a protocol was identified as an issue by Non-Voting Co-opted Members at a Scrutiny event held in July, 2008.

Background

- 4 A number of Co-optees, Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen attended an Overview and Scrutiny Training event (Scrutiny Café) held at the Leadership Centre, Spennymoor on the 28 July, 2008.
- 5 Following the event an Action Plan was produced specifying the issues raised by the Co-optees, the proposed action to be undertaken in relation to those issues and a timeframe stating an approximate date as to when the action would be implemented.
- 6 A number of the proposed actions detailed in the Action Plan have already been implemented however one of the issues identified by the Co-optees was the need to establish a protocol in 2009 for the appointment of future Co-optees.

Protocol

- 7 The purpose of establishing a protocol would be to:
 - formalise the appointment process for Non-voting Co-optees;
 - ensure that as many Overview and Scrutiny members as is practical are involved in the appointment process;

- that those appointed as Non-voting Co-optees meet the requirements of the person specification;
- that a process of formal induction, training and on-going support is available to the appointed Non-voting Co-optees;
- that by appointing for a two year period (2010-2012), this provides an opportunity for Non-voting Co-opted members to stand down if they wish to and gives Overview and Scrutiny the opportunity to refresh membership and seek representatives with different experience and skills.

(A Summary of the protocol is attached as Appendix 1 to the report)

- 8 Each Non-voting Co-optee will be subject to a formal appointment Process involving the submission of an application form, and an interview supported by references (as detailed in the protocol).
- 9 The existing non-voting Co-optees will continue to serve in 2009 with the formalised appointment process commencing in January 2010.
- 10 Except for the 5 Statutory appointed Co-opted members on the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Scrutiny Committee for Children and Young People who have voting rights for educational matters only, Co-opted members will not have voting rights.
- 11 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 currently serving non-voting Co-optees will be given the opportunity to apply for a further period of service as a Co-optee, however they will be subjected to the formal appointment process.(as detailed in the attached protocol).
- 12 In relation to the number of Non-voting Co-optees appointed to serve on a 'Cross Cutting' or 'Light Touch' Scrutiny review the number shall not exceed 2 for each review.
- 13 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.
- 14 The process governing the appointment of Non-voting Co-optees will commence in January 2010 to ensure that Co-optees are appointed and in place for the New Municipal year.
- 15 The protocol for the appointment of Non-voting Co-optees has been developed according to examples of best Practice supplied by the City of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council, London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames and Telford and Wrekin Council.

Next Steps

- 16 Following consideration and discussion of the draft summary protocol by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, it is intended that the draft protocol will be considered by the Constitution Working Group with a view to the inclusion of the final agreed protocol in the Constitution of the New Authority.

Recommendations

- 17 That the attached draft summary protocol be approved for submission to the Constitution Working Group for further discussion and consideration with a view to the inclusion of the agreed protocol in the Constitution of the New Authority.
- 18 That the protocol for the appointment of Non-voting Co-opted Scrutiny Members be implemented to commence the process in January 2010.
- 19 That the existing non-voting Co-optees continue to serve for the duration of 2009 and until 31 March 2010, with the newly appointed Non-voting Co-optees taking up their appointment from the 1 April 2010.

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