



**DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
JANUARY 2014**

**PROTOCOL FOR THE
CO-OPTION OF NON-STATUTORY, NON-VOTING
SCRUTINY MEMBERS**

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INTRODUCTION

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

Introduction

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

The purpose of establishing a protocol for the co-option of non-statutory, non-voting Scrutiny members is as follows:

- To formalise the appointment of representatives
- Ensure that as many Overview and Scrutiny members as is practical are involved in the appointment process
- That those appointed 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 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

The attached protocol has been developed in accordance with examples of Best Practice ensuring that the process is engaging whilst more formalised.



**Protocol for Co-opting
Non-Statutory, Non-Voting Scrutiny Members**

Protocol for Co-opting Non-Statutory, Non-Voting Scrutiny Members

Number of Co-opted Members

1. The majority of Members on a Scrutiny Committee will be elected Members of the Council however the provision is available for the appointment of a number of non-statutory, non-voting co-optees on each Committee. This number will not exceed 2. The exception to this is the Scrutiny Committee for Children and Young People which will have an additional 5 statutory appointed voting co-optees, who have voting rights in relation to education matters. The voting representatives are as follows:
 - (a) 1 Church of England diocese representative
 - (b) 1 Roman Catholic diocese representative; and
 - (c) 3 Parent Governor representatives

The above voting co-opted members are appointed via a separate statutory process (the appointment process is covered in 'The Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001') and therefore will not be subject to the policy and protocol for the appointment of non-statutory, non-voting co-optees.

2. Each non-statutory, non-voting co-optee will be subject to the formal appointment process as detailed in the attached protocol.
3. Except for the 5 Statutory appointed co-opted members serving 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.
4. In accordance with the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 additional Co-optees (employees or officers of a responsible authority or of a Co-operating person or body) may be appointed to the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (The Crime and Disorder Committee of the authority for the purpose of the regulations). Such Co-optees will not be entitled to vote on any particular matter unless the Committee determines otherwise.
5. Each non-statutory, non-voting co-opted member will be appointed for a period of two years (option to extend for a further two year period subject to the agreement of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board). 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 subjected to the formal appointment process as detailed in the attached protocol.

6. In relation to the number of non-statutory, non-voting co-optees appointed to serve on a Scrutiny review including 'Cross Cutting' or 'Light Touch' reviews the number shall not exceed 2 for each type of review.
7. In addition to standing non-statutory, non-voting co-optees, review groups can co-opt individuals with 'expert knowledge' onto a review group for the duration of the review.
8. The accumulated successive length of service for a Non-Voting Co-optee must not exceed four years.

Appointment of Non-Voting Co-optees

9. All non-statutory, non-voting co-optees will be appointed according to the attached protocol for the appointment of non-statutory, non-voting co-optees which covers the following:-
 - Placing of advertisement
 - Applications process
 - Appointment procedure
 - Induction, training and ongoing support
10. The protocol for the appointment of non-statutory, 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.



**PROTOCOL FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF NON-
STATUTORY, NON-VOTING CO-OPTED SCRUTINY
MEMBERS FOR A PERIOD OF 2 YEARS**

Protocol for the appointment of Non-Statutory, Non-Voting Co-opted Scrutiny Members for a period of 2 Years

Advertisements

Relevant information will be placed on the Council's website and circulated to the Area Action Partnerships (AAPs).

In addition, letters will be sent to existing non-statutory, non-voting co-optees applying for a further term of office asking them to express an interest.

Recruitment activity will begin in January 2016 for the next appointment period of non-statutory, non-voting co-optees, to ensure that non-voting co-opted members can be appointed in time for the new municipal year.

The relevant information will ask interested parties to contact the Scrutiny Team to express their interest. They will then be sent further details to enable them to decide whether to apply including:

- Information on the role of overview and scrutiny and the role of a non-statutory, non-voting co-optee.
- Application form.
- Protocol for co-opting non-statutory, non-voting co-optees.

Applications

Applicants will be required to fill in a short application form giving their contact details, which scrutiny committee they would like to sit on, and a statement of not more than 400 words explaining why they want to be involved in the scrutiny process and what they can contribute to the role.

Following the closing date for the receipt of applications the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board; the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee and an appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Officer will identify suitable candidates from the applications received for their Committee. This process will be done by assessing the application against the role description and person specification. The selected candidates will be invited to an interview with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, the relevant Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee, together with a member from the appropriate Committee (minority member) and an Overview and Scrutiny Officer. The panel will then decide which of the applicants are the most suitable to be appointed as a non-statutory, non-voting co-opted member (decision can be by majority, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will have a casting vote if there is an equal number of members and there is a tied vote). The interview will last for approximately 20 minutes with the members of the panel supplied with questions prior to interview. The applicants will be notified in writing as to whether they have been successful.

Appointment

The successful applicants will be contacted to arrange an induction. Those who have not been successful as non-statutory, non-voting co-opted members will be invited to join a pool which can be drawn upon for light touch reviews which relate to their area of expertise.

Non-statutory, non-voting co-opted members will be appointed for a term of two years (option to extend for a further two year period subject to the agreement of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board). At the end of each term of office, each Scrutiny Committee will ask the current non-statutory, non-voting co-opted members whether they wish to continue, or whether it would be appropriate to seek alternative co-opted members. Any non-statutory, non-voting co-optees wishing to continue would be subject to the appointment process and would have to complete the appropriate form and attend an interview. Co-opting members for a further term will mean the committee can benefit from the experience they will have built up. However, having a set term of office gives the opportunity for non-statutory, non-voting co-opted members to stand down if they wish to and also gives the Committee the opportunity to refresh membership and seek representatives with different experiences and skills. The accumulated successive length of service of a non-voting co-optee must not exceed four years.

In addition, non-statutory, non-voting co-opted members will be required to sign the Council's Code of Conduct which sets out the standards of behaviour and a Declaration of Interest Form identifying any interests which an individual may have which would require recording (advice will be provided).

Non-statutory, non-voting co-opted members may terminate their membership by giving one month's notice to the Head of Planning and Performance (Designated Scrutiny Officer) should their circumstances change during their term of office and they feel that they can no longer fill the commitments of a non-statutory, non-voting co-optee.

Induction, training and ongoing support

Each non-statutory, non-voting co-opted member will have an individual induction once they are appointed, before they attend their first Scrutiny meeting. This induction meeting will be held with the relevant Scrutiny Officer, the Chairman/Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Chairman/Vice-Chairman of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee which they will be joining.

The same scrutiny training opportunities that are available to elected members will be made available to non-statutory, non-voting co-opted members. This includes both in-house and external training, and may include scrutiny skills training or training which will increase knowledge in the areas within the remit of the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

The position of non-statutory, non-voting co-opted member is a voluntary post, but the Council will make payments to co-opted members to cover expenses incurred

whilst fulfilling their duties as a non-statutory, non-voting co-opted member (travelling and subsistence allowance).