

Re-Appointment Of Sub-Committees and Focus Group

Purpose of Report

1. To seek approval for the re-appointment of previously established Sub-Committees and Focus Group of the Committee.

Background

2. The Constitution provides for the Committee to appoint such Sub-Committees as may from time to time be necessary for the efficient discharge of its functions (paragraph 2.5 of Part 3 of the Constitution). In particular, the Committee has previously established the following Sub-Committees:
 - **Assessment Sub-Committee**
To consider whether an allegation should be investigated
 - **Review Sub-Committee**
To consider any request for a review of a decision that an allegation should not be investigated
 - **Hearing Sub-Committee**
To conduct hearings into alleged breaches of the Code
3. The above mentioned sub-committees were established to deal with the Committee's responsibilities under S.54 of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended by S.188 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Their composition is as follows:
4. Three members of the Standards Committee as determined by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the chairman of the Committee on the basis of member availability and chaired by an independent member. No member will serve on more than one of the above sub-committees for any one allegation or set of allegations. However, a member may serve on both the Assessment Sub-Committee and the Hearing Sub-Committee in exceptional circumstances to be approved by the Monitoring Officer. Members of the Review Sub-Committee may not serve on any other sub-committee dealing with the same or linked complaint.

5. **Consideration Sub-Committee**

In July 2009, the Committee established the Consideration Sub-Committee to consider the Monitoring Officer's final investigation reports with the following composition:

Three members of the Standards Committee chaired by an independent member, and to include an elected member of Wiltshire Council, and a town or parish representative if the subject member is a town or parish councillor;

Membership is determined by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Standards Committee on the basis of member availability.

6. **Dispensation Sub-Committee**

In July, 2009, the Committee established the Dispensation Sub-Committee to consider and determine requests for dispensation under the Standards Committee (Further Provisions) (England) Regulations with the following composition:

As determined by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the chairman of the Standards Committee on the basis of member availability, to include one independent member (who will be the Chairman), one elected member and one parish or town council representative.

7. The Committee is therefore asked to re-appoint the above mentioned sub-committees for the municipal year 2010/11.

8. The Communication Sub-Committee and Training Sub-Committee previously established by the Committee have since been disbanded and replaced by task and finish groups. Such groups are established to undertake particular tasks identified by the Committee as and when a need is identified. Membership of Task and Finish Groups is drawn from the Standards Committee.

9. **Focus Group on the Review of the Constitution**

Council had previously requested this Committee to consider the effectiveness of the constitution six months since adopting a new constitution put in place for the commencement of Wiltshire Council on 1 April 2009. In November 2009, the Committee established a cross-party Focus Group to undertake the detailed work required to carry out the review. That review has been completed with a new constitution adopted by Council in December 2010. Council agreed that the Focus Group should remain in being to assist with ongoing work to review the constitution as required and particularly to review the constitution in light of forthcoming changes to legislation most notably the Localism Bill.

10. The Focus Group comprises a member from each political group on the Council (Cllrs Wheeler, Hubbard, Newbury, Carter and Rogers), a representative of the Audit Committee (Cllr Doyle) and Scrutiny Committee (Cllr Trotman) and three members of the Standards Committee (Mrs McCord – chairman, Mr Middleton and Mr Neale).

Proposal

11. To re-appoint the following Sub-Committees and Focus Group of the Standards Committee on the same basis as previously agreed:

- (i) Assessment Sub-Committee
- (ii) Review Sub-Committee
- (iii) Hearing Sub-Committee
- (iv) Consideration Sub-Committee
- (v) Dispensation Sub-Committee
- (vi) Focus Group on the Review of the Constitution

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Unpublished documents relied upon in the production of this report:

None