

Wiltshire Council

Annual Council

15 May 2012

Appointment of councillors to Committees

Introduction

1. Following on from the decision to formally appoint/re-appoint committees and allocate seats to political groups, the Council must now formally agree the appointment of councillors and substitutes to those Committees.

Appointment of Councillors and Substitutes

2. Each political group should state the names of the councillors it wishes to take its allocated places on committees and when those wishes are known, the Council is under a duty to make the appointment of those councillors as soon as practicable. It is a legal requirement however that the Council formally approves the appointment of councillors to committees and therefore it is essential that each political group notifies the Head of Democratic Services of their nominated councillors to serve on committees, preferably before the day of the Council meeting. Group Leaders may also wish to bear in mind the advantages of achieving a geographical spread of appointees particularly for area planning committees.
3. The Constitution currently provides that the Council will appoint substitute councillors to serve on each committee. Each political group is currently entitled to appoint up to three substitutes where it has a councillor on that committee. As with nominations of committee members (see paragraph 2 above) it is a legal requirement that the Council formally approves the appointment of substitute members to committees and therefore it is essential that each political group notifies the Head of Democratic Services of their nominated substitute members to serve on committees, preferably before the day of the Council meeting.
4. The use of the substitute system by councillors is fairly patchy and a number of meetings have been held with the number of councillors attending well below the maximum size of the committee. Councillors are encouraged to make use of the substitute system. If a councillor finds that they are unable to attend a meeting then they should contact Democratic Services who will record and present your apologies at the meeting. They can also advise on the named substitutes for your

political group. The onus is on the councillor to contact the substitute councillor although it would be helpful for you to notify Democratic services as they will report the temporary change to the membership of the committee.

5. A list of appointments to committees that reflects the new scrutiny structure and the revised appointment of committees as set out in Agenda item 10(a), will be discussed with Group Leaders and submitted to Council in due course.

Committees of the Council

6. There are specific issues that need to be considered under the appointment of councillors.
7. The statutory roles regarding senior officers appointments embodied in the Council's Constitution require the Officer Appointments Committee to include at least one member of the Executive.
8. Also the Staffing Policy Committee requires two members of the Cabinet as Cabinet representation is required on its sub-committees by the Council's constitution and the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001.
9. The new Standards Committee has provision for the appointment of up to 8 co-opted members. These have no voting rights and are advisory only. It is proposed that these will be selected by a process to be agreed by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the new Standards Committee with appointments to be confirmed by the Council at a future meeting.
10. Until the final regulations are published on the new Police and Crime Panel it cannot be guaranteed that substitute members will be acceptable. However in advance of this it is suggested that substitute members are appointed as normal.
12. Wherever possible the members of Area Planning Committees should be made up of local councillors. These committees however, unless the Council determines otherwise, will still need to be appointed on a politically proportional basis.
13. All unitary councillors representing the electoral divisions covered by an Area Board will be appointed to their relevant area board as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

Matters for Decision

- (A) To appoint councillors to serve on those committees in accordance with the agreed scheme of committee places, until the next occasion membership is reviewed under the provisions of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989.

- (B) To appoint substitute members (to a maximum of three per group) to the committees referred to in (A) above.
- (C) To appoint those councillors representing electoral divisions to their respective area boards as set out in the Appendix 1 attached to this report.

Ian Gibbons
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Appendices

Appendix 1 – List of appointments to Area Boards