



**Community and Wellbeing
Scrutiny Committee**
20 September 2016

**Report from the Director of Policy,
Performance and Partnerships**

For information

Wards affected: ALL

**Co-opted members on the Community and Wellbeing
Scrutiny Committee**

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report clarifies the role of co-opted members on the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members of the committee are asked to discuss and agree the contents of this report.

3.0 Background

3.1 Brent Council established a new Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in February 2016 along with a Resources and Public Realm Scrutiny Committee. This dual structure replaced the single Scrutiny Committee on 18 May 2016, which was introduced in May 2014. The co-opted members who had been appointed to the former Scrutiny Committee were transferred to the new Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, which oversees scrutiny of education, children's and young people's services as well as health, housing, public health, adult social care, and the safeguarding arrangements of adults, and the safeguarding of children and young people.

3.2 Appointment of the new members was confirmed by the Annual Meeting of Full Council on 18 May 2016. The names of the co-opted members who are statutory and non-statutory, and the observer organisations are in Appendix A. The appointment of new members if there is a vacancy is confirmed by Full Council.

3.3 Co-opted members bring their knowledge and expertise of a particular environment – and also an outside perspective – to enhance the role of scrutiny. Their presence on committee also makes the process more open and transparent, and they have knowledge, skills and experience which can greatly inform scrutiny's activities and enhance the role of the committee's members.

- 3.4 The single Scrutiny Committee had statutory co-opted members whose role was transferred to the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny committee. The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has four statutory voting co-opted members. By law, there is a requirement to involve specific statutory co-opted members from the Church of England diocese and the Roman Catholic diocese as well as parent governor representatives. Brent's Community and Wellbeing Committee has one member representing the Church of England diocese, one for the Roman Catholic diocese; one parent governor member representing primary schools and one parent governor representing secondary schools (the post is currently vacant).
- 3.5 These statutory co-opted members have voting rights on school education issues. It should be noted that formal votes taken by the committee are extremely rare.
- 3.6 The expectation is that these co-opted members will contribute to the discussion on school education issues or take part in the discussion on items involving partnership work with schools. However, they can take part in any item discussed at the committee if they choose to do so.
- 3.7 While co-opted statutory members are welcome to attend any of the meetings, items which involve discussion of school education matters will be highlighted on the annual work programme. Additionally, items which may involve discussion of partnership work with schools will be highlighted on the annual work programme. The statutory co-opted members may choose to only attend those meetings as they judge appropriate.
- 3.8 Brent Council's single Scrutiny Committee had two non-statutory co-opted members whose role was transferred to the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny committee. These were one member to represent Jewish faith schools in Brent and one member to represent Muslim faith schools in Brent. They represent only faith schools which are maintained schools in Brent. The post to represent Muslim faith schools became vacant on 1 September 2016.
- 3.9 These non-statutory co-opted members do not have voting rights on school education issues. It should be noted again that formal votes taken by the committee are extremely rare.
- 3.10 The expectation is that the non-statutory co-opted members will contribute to the discussion on school education issues or take part in the discussion on items involving partnership work with schools. However, they can take part in any item discussed at committee if they choose to do so.
- 3.11 While non-statutory co-opted members are welcome to attend any of the meetings, items which involve discussion of school education matters will be highlighted on the annual work programme. Additionally, items at meetings which may involve discussion of partnership work with schools will be highlighted on the annual work programme. The non-statutory co-opted members may choose to only attend those meetings as they judge appropriate.
- 3.12 As members of a scrutiny committee, all the co-opted members are to follow the principles and practices of scrutiny in Brent which are set out in the 2016/17
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Scrutiny Handbook. In short, scrutiny's function is to play a constructive role in holding Cabinet and its decision-making to account as well as the decision-making of external partner organisations for which a scrutiny committee has a remit.

4.0 Detail

4.1 The statutory and non-statutory co-opted members will be involved in the work of the committee, including:

- receiving electronic notification of the publication of committee agendas and minutes
- invitations to pre-meetings
- being able to suggest topics for potential inclusion on the annual scrutiny work programme.

They will also be offered support as provided to members such as training or support from the Scrutiny Officer for that committee.

4.2 Parent governor representatives are appointed from among parent governors in the borough. If a vacancy exists then it is advertised.

4.3 The procedure for appointing statutory members representing the Church of England is that their representative is nominated by the Diocesan Board of Education which covers the London borough of Brent. A representative for the Roman Catholic Diocese is nominated by the bishop of the diocese who covers the London borough of Brent and they are appointed by Full Council.

4.4 The procedure for non-statutory members representing Jewish faith schools and Muslim faith schools is that the appropriate body representing those faiths makes the nomination and then full council makes the appointment.

4.5 A statutory voting co-opted member must sign an undertaking agreeing to be bound by the Members' Code of Conduct and has register any interests which by the code they are required to. This is a legal requirement and failure to comply with the code's requirements can constitute a criminal offence.

4.6 Non-voting, non-statutory co-opted members also have to sign up to the code and comply with its requirements, but there is no risk of criminal sanctions.

4.7 The role profile of a co-opted member of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee is set out in Appendix B.

5.0 Observers

5.1 The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny committee also has observers put forward by two organisations: Brent Youth Parliament and Brent Teachers' Association, which is made up of the recognised teaching trade unions.

- 5.2 Brent Youth Parliament and Brent Teachers' Association have four named members each, who can attend meetings of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee as observers. They have no voting rights and may take part in the discussion only at the discretion of the committee chair. The names of the observers for 2016/17 are in Appendix A.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. The relevant legislation is the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001; Local Government Act 2000; and the Localism Act 2011.

8.0 Diversity Implications

- 8.1 There are no diversity implications immediately arising from this report.

Contact Officers

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APPENDIX A

Co-opted Members

Representing	Name of member	Statutory	Voting on education matters
Church of England Diocese schools	Mother Christine Cargill	✓	✓
Roman Catholic Diocese schools	Alloysius Frederick	✓	✓
Secondary school parent governors	VACANT	✓	✓
Primary school parent governors	Iram Yaqub	✓	✓
Jewish faith schools	Dr Jeff Levison	✗	✗
Muslim faith schools	VACANT	✗	✗

Observers

Harry Brown, Brent Teachers' Association
Lesley Gouldbourne, Brent Teachers' Association
Sotira Michael, Brent Teachers' Association
Jean Roberts, Brent Teachers' Association

Dilan Dattani, Brent Youth Parliament
Jai Patel, Brent Youth Parliament
Shivani Trivedi, Brent Youth Parliament
Leesha Varsani, Brent Youth Parliament

APPENDIX B

Role Profile of a Scrutiny Co-opted Member

The role of a scrutiny co-opted member is to:

1. Prepare for, attend and actively contribute to the work of scrutiny committee. This will include:

- helping to develop an annual programme of work
- gathering information and evidence
- analysing and challenging information
- drawing conclusions and making recommendations based on evidence
- monitoring the progress of recommendations.

2. Bring an external perspective to the work of scrutiny, making a link between scrutiny and local communities.

3. Contribute specialist knowledge, expertise and experience to the work of scrutiny.

4. Express the views of the constituency they are representing, if any, and not just his or her personal view or experience.

5. Undertake work in scrutiny on behalf of the whole borough and not just one particular sector or viewpoint.

6. Act independently of party politics and lobbying interests.

7. Ensure that the organisation they are representing, if any, is kept up-to-date on the work of scrutiny.

8. Show courtesy and respect to other scrutiny members and officers

9. Respect the sensitivity and confidentiality of information that they may hear as a scrutiny member and act with discretion.

10. Abide by the requirements of the Council's Constitution, and Members' Code of Conduct.
