
CO-OPTED MEMBERS REVIEW GROUP – FINAL REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the outcome and findings of the Review Group established by this Scrutiny Committee to examine the current position with regard to statutory and non-statutory representatives.

Summary

2. At a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 2 September 2013 it was agreed to establish a Review Group and all Members of the Scrutiny Committee were invited to participate in the Review.
3. The Review Group met on 6 November 2013 and a number of issues were discussed and considered at this meeting.
4. The final report of the Review Group is attached (**Appendix A**).

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that Members approve the recommendations in the final report.

**Paul Wildsmith
Director of Resources**

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder
Health and Well Being	This report has implications to the address Health and Well Being of residents of Darlington, through scrutinising the services provided by the NHS Trusts.
Carbon Impact	There are no issues which this report needs to address.
Diversity	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address.
Wards Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Ward is considered to be minimal.
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Group is considered to be minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The report contributes to the delivery of the objectives of the Community Strategy in a number of ways through the involvement of local elected members contributing to the Healthy Darlington Theme Group.
Efficiency	The Work Programmes are integral to scrutinising and monitoring services efficiently (and effectively), however this report does not identify specific efficiency savings.

MAIN REPORT

Introduction

1. This is the final report of the Task and Finish Review Group, established by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to examine the position of statutory and non-statutory co-opted Members on this Scrutiny Committee.

Background Information

2. At the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 2 September 2013 it was agreed to establish a Review Group and all Members of the Scrutiny were invited to participate in the Review.
3. A wide number of issues have been considered and discussed at a meeting of the Review Group held on 6 November 2013.

Aim

4. The overall aim of the Review Group was to review the current position of co-opted Members on the Scrutiny Committee with regard to the changes to how Scrutiny Committees now operate and the changes brought about by the Localism Act 2011.
5. The Review Group was also mindful of existing requirements under the Education Act 1996 and the School Standards Framework Act 1998 for local authorities to include parent governor and diocesan representatives on overview and scrutiny committees when considering education matters.
6. The Review Group also felt that that change in the relationship between councils and local education providers gave an opportunity to rethink the role of the statutory co-optees.

Methods of Investigation

7. The Review Group met with the Assistant Director of Children, Families and Learning on 6 November, 2013 and the notes are attached as **Appendix 1**.

Current Position

8. Listed below are the statutory and non-statutory co-optees currently on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee:-

Statutory Co-optees:- Voting Members :-

- 1 Church of England Diocese Representative;
- 1 Roman Catholic Diocese Representative;
- 3 Parent Governor Representatives (Primary/Secondary and Special School Parent Governor Representatives – 3 Vacancies).

Non-Statutory Co-optees:- Non-Voting Members :-

- 1 representative of the Darlington Association of Governors (vacant);
- 3 Community Representatives;
- 1 Representative from the Darlington College;
- 1 Representative from the Queen Elizabeth Sixth-Form College;
- 1 Primary Head Teacher Representative;
- 1 Primary Classroom Teacher (vacant);
- 1 Secondary Classroom Teacher (vacant);
- 1 Secondary Head Teacher Representative (vacant);
- 2 Representatives from the Darlington Partnership (vacant).

Findings

9. There are currently 3 vacancies for parent governor co-optees and recruitment has always proved to be difficult, however, as there is still a requirement to appoint parent governor representatives on Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Sub-Committees dealing with education matters, Members of the Review Group agreed that these vacancies need to be filled as soon as possible.
10. With regard to the non-statutory co-optees, these are to be appointed at the discretion of the Committee.
11. The Scrutiny Committee has recently successfully recruited two new community representatives (non-voting).
12. There are also a number of vacancies for non-statutory roles on this Scrutiny Committee and these have also been difficult to recruit to in a voluntary capacity.
13. Members reviewed the list of non-statutory co-optees to try and alleviate the problem of recruitment and to encourage continued attendance of the existing co-opted Members. It proposed a reduction of the number of school representatives and a proposal to remove some of the current vacant positions.
14. There is currently a representative from the College and the Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College and it was suggested that they both be contacted to see if they were willing to agree which representative wished to remain on the Scrutiny Committee.
15. Members also considered extending the list of representatives on the Scrutiny Committee to include representatives from health, police and social care and after

discussion it was agreed that any representative can be invited to attend a meeting of Scrutiny at any time if the agenda requires it.

16. It was also highlighted that Scrutiny Committee meetings are open to the public, therefore any representative, who is no longer required, be made aware that they still have the right to attend any meeting they so wish as a member of the public and that they would be welcome to do so.

Financial Implications

17. There are no financial implications to consider.

Conclusion

18. The Review Group felt that in view of the current changes and requirements of co-opted members on Scrutiny the changes proposed would be appropriate to meet legal requirements and would continue to include representatives from interested outside organisations.
19. Members acknowledged that the involvement of co-optees is very important in task and finish and review group work dealing with issues that have an impact on children and young people, however agreed to reduce the role of 'formal' co-optee input at Scrutiny Committee meetings, which representatives may feel obliged to attend, but may have minimal value.

Recommendation

20. It is recommended :-
 - (a) That Officers seek to recruit to the vacant co-opted members positions for Parent Governor Representatives for Primary, Secondary and Special Schools.
 - (b) That the number of school representatives be reduced to 1 Primary School teaching representative, 1 Secondary School teaching representative and 1 representative for Further Education.
 - (c) That Officers seek to fill the vacancy for a Secondary School teaching representative and combine the representatives for the Darlington College and the Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College to 1 further education representative.
 - (d) That the vacant positions for 1 representative of the Darlington Association of Governors and 2 representatives from the Darlington Partnership be removed.

Co-opted Members Review Group