

**APPOINTMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES  
(Report by the Head of Legal & Democratic Services and  
Monitoring Officer)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Members may recall that Regulations arising under the Local Government Act 2000 required the former Standards Committee to comprise at least two Members from Town or Parish Councils for which the Committee was responsible and for Parish representatives also to be present at meetings when matters relating to Town or Parish Councils were being considered.
- 1.2 Whilst the District Council will continue to have responsibility for dealing with standards complaints against Town or Parish Councillors, there is no longer a duty for Parish Council representatives to be appointed to the Committee and consequently the Parish Council representatives on the former Standards Committee have ceased to hold office.
- 1.3 However, the District Council can choose whether it wishes to continue to involve Town or Parish Council representatives in their new Standards Committee and if so, how many.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At the meeting in June, the Committee recommended that the Council should resolve 'to invite Parish Councils to nominate Parish Councillors to be co-opted as non-voting Members of the Committee'. This course of action was approved by the Council at its meeting held on 4th July, 2012.
- 2.2 As the Committee will still be involved in considering complaints in respect of Parish Councillors and in training Parish Councils on the Code of Conduct it is arguable that, having Parish representatives as co-opted non-voting Members on the Committee (or as part of case hearings) would ensure that the Committee retained an insight into local councils amongst its membership. Such representation also could continue to bring knowledge about local issues which has been helpful, in the past, when assessing Parish cases.
- 2.3 Due to a resignation the former Committee operated successfully for some time with only two rather than three Parish Council representatives in place. This gave the Committee the flexibility it required to undertake the initial assessment of Member complaints and to be able to progress any subsequent reviews or hearings.

**3. APPOINTMENT PROCESS**

- 3.1 The Council has always approached the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (and its predecessor) for nominations to any vacancy which has arisen in Town and Parish Council representation. Whilst there is concern that CPALC might not be as representative of Town and Parish Councils as previously, the

District Council still needs to demonstrate that it is appointing Town and Parish Council representatives to the Committee in a fair and open way.

3.2 Whilst it is for the District Council to decide how it wishes to recruit and appoint Town and Parish Council representatives, it is important that these representatives should have the trust of Town and Parish Councils in the authority's area and therefore the Committee might consider that they should be directly involved in the selection process. With this in mind and given the experience and knowledge of the former Town and Parish Council representatives, the Committee may consider it reasonable to –

- ◆ invite Messrs J Alexander and G Watkins to express an interest in the two posts of Town and Parish Council representative on the Committee;
- ◆ invite the views of CPALC on the appointment process and if considered appropriate, to seek the two nominations required through their membership; and
- ◆ invite all Parish Councils to request their Members to express an interest in the positions.

3.4 Members are reminded that a small allowance of £231 per annum formerly was payable and any travelling and subsistence costs incurred in attending meetings of the Committee and training events was met by the District Council.

#### 4. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (a) that Members reaffirm their decision to appoint two Town or Parish Councillors to be co-opted as non-voting Members of the Committee;
- (b) that an allowance of £231 per annum be made payable to the two appointed Town or Parish Council representatives plus reimbursement for any subsistence/travelling costs incurred in attending meetings of the Committee or training events;
- (c) that Members' views be invited on the most appropriate way to appoint two Town or Parish Council representatives to the Committee; and
- (d) that, subject to the receipt of expressions of interest via whichever method is selected by the Committee, the Monitoring Officer be authorised to appoint two Town or Parish Council representatives after consultation with the Independent Person.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Previous Committee reports – July 2010 and June 2012.

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