

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
SCHEME OF CO-OPTION – VOTING RIGHTS SCHEME

1. Background

This scheme is made by the Isle of Wight Council under paragraph 11 of Schedule A1 to the Local Government Act 2000 and under all other enabling powers to provide for the co-option of persons to its overview and scrutiny committees.

Copies of this scheme are available for public inspection at the offices at County Hall, High Street, Newport, PO30 1UD and on the Council's website at www.iow.gov.uk

2. Purpose

An overview and scrutiny committee may include persons who are not members of the local authority (see section 9FA (4) of the Local Government Act 2000), and the Council recognises the valuable input and different perspectives a person who is not a member of the local authority may bring into the Council's decision-making process.

The Council considers, therefore, that the co-option of a person (called a co-opted member) to any of its overview and scrutiny committees will, by enabling a person interested in serving the community to become involved in local democracy, contribute to the promotion of good and better administration.

A co-optee's role is to complement, rather than replace, the role of elected councillors who remain democratically accountable to the electorate.

If a co-opted person is to be permitted to vote (see section 9FA (5) of the Local Government Act 2000), there is a requirement to have a 'scheme of co-option' referred to as a 'voting rights scheme' (in the absence of other statutory authority).

3. Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Council currently has appointed 4 overview and scrutiny committees –

- Corporate Scrutiny Committee
- Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services, Education and Skills
- Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Social Care
- Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration

The number and terms of reference of any overview and scrutiny committee may vary from time to time and are set out in the Council's Constitution. Their principal purpose is to look at policy and to review and scrutinise decisions of the Cabinet, the Council, and its partners and to make reports and recommendations on matters affecting the Isle of Wight and its inhabitants.

4. Co-option Process

Appointment of a person as a co-opted member on an overview and scrutiny committee will be made by the Full Council.

To be eligible for co-option, a person must meet the qualification for election as a member of a local authority in terms of age, residency or employment, and nationality.

5. Term of Office

A person will be co-opted for a period of up to four years until the next ordinary elections, but their period of co-option may come to an end earlier for any of the following reasons –

- by resignation in writing to the Head of Paid Service,
- failure to attend a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee to which they have been appointed for a period of six consecutive months,
- any reasons that would disqualify a person from continuing to hold office as a councillor, or
- by resolution of the Full Council.

6. Members' Code of Conduct

Under the Localism Act 2011 a person who is a voting co-opted member must comply, when they act in their role as a member, with the Members' Code of Conduct as it applies from time to time. Any allegation of a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct will be dealt with in accordance with the arrangements agreed by the Full Council from time to time.

7. Membership and Voting

A co-opted person will be a member of the overview and committee to which they have been appointed. There is no right to substitute where that co-opted member cannot attend unless the Full Council has appointed another person as a co-opted person to act in that person's place when absent for the entire meeting.

Subject to any disqualifying interest(s), the co-opted person is entitled to attend and speak at any meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee to which they have been appointed (including those meetings where the public have been

excluded from the meeting) in accordance with the relevant procedural rules set out in the Constitution from time to time.

Permission is given by Full Council in accordance with this scheme whereby the co-opted person may vote at meetings of the overview and scrutiny committee of the Council (or sub-committee of the overview and scrutiny committee) to which they have been appointed provided that:

- such a co-opted person does not have any disqualifying interest(s) from voting; and
- the matter is not a crime and disorder function of any crime and disorder committee as separate permission to vote needs to be sought direct from the crime and disorder committee, and eligibility to vote is determined under the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 (as amended).

Under this scheme, no more than one co-opted member shall sit on, and vote at any meeting of, an overview and scrutiny committee (or sub-committee of such an overview and scrutiny committee). This maximum limit shall be given effect as if this limit is included in the Constitution. (NB. This does not apply to any statutory arrangements to the contrary, for example, qualifying persons included on the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Children's Services, Education and who can, by law, vote on educational matters within the remit of that committee and which fall to be decided at that meeting – see paragraphs 6 to 8 of Schedule 1A to the Local Government Act 2000).

8. Training

The Council shall ensure that suitable training is made available from time to time to any co-opted member, and it will be for the Council to determine what is deemed suitable to enable that co-opted member to properly discharge their duties.

9. Members' Allowance Scheme

The Members' Allowance Scheme that applies from time to time will set out if any allowance or other payments are to be payable to any co-opted person.

10. Variation / Revocation

Any previous scheme of co-option made is hereby revoked.

This scheme may be varied from time to time or revoked by the Council.

15 September 2021