



**Hampshire
& Isle of Wight**
FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

HIWFRA Full Authority

Purpose: Approval

Date: **14 DECEMBER 2021**

Title: **APPOINTMENTS REPORT AND MINOR CONSTITUTIONAL
UPDATES**

Report of Monitoring Officer

SUMMARY

1. This report invites the Authority to appoint Substitute Members to its Committees to ensure that political groups are adequately represented at Committee meetings.
2. The report also seeks the approval of the Authority to some minor consequential amendments to the Constitution in respect of Substitute Members.
3. The report also recommends a change to the appointment of the Chair of Standards and Governance Committee.

BACKGROUND

Substitute Members

4. The Authority currently has two standing committees:
 - (a) S&GC – Comprised of 5 members (3 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrat and 1 Independent)
 - (b) 3SFire Stakeholder Committee – also comprised of 5 members (3 Conservative, 1 Liberal Democrat and 1 Independent)
5. The quorum for committee meetings is a minimum of 3 members, but there is no requirement that at least 2 of the Constituent Authorities are represented. (This is only a quorum requirement for full Authority meetings).

6. The Authority itself is currently made up of 7 Conservative members (6 from HCC, 1 from SCC), 3 Liberal Democrat members (1 from PCC and 2 from HCC), and one independent member (from IWC)
7. As a result of the Authority membership, there are two political groups – the Conservative group and the Liberal Democrat group. (A political group must have at least 2 members, so there is not an “Independent group” on the Authority).
8. Members have requested that deputy or “substitute members” be appointed to, to ensure good attendance if substantive members of the committee are unable to attend a meeting. This will also assist in ensuring the two political groups are properly represented in the event a substantive member is unable to attend a meeting.
9. It is proposed that the Authority appoints a substitute member to each committee from each of the two political groups. (NB – there is no requirement for the number of substitutes to be proportionate to the size of each political group, so having one per group is legitimate, particularly as the intention is to ensure proper group representation at meetings).
10. It is also proposed that the minor changes to Standing Orders at Appendix A are agreed, in order to clarify the rules in respect of substitute members attending committee meetings. These ensure that members who are substituting must attend the whole meeting and that notice must be given to the Clerk or Monitoring Officer before the meeting begins. This will assist in ensuring the decision made at meetings where substitutes attend are lawful.

Chair of Standards and Governance Committee

11. The existing Chair of the Standards and Governance Committee, Cllr Fairhurst, has decided to step down from this role. Cllr Fairhurst will remain a member of the Standards and Governance Committee. In the circumstances, the Authority is asked to appoint a replacement Chair and, if required, a replacement Vice Chair.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

12. There are no financial or resource implications from the content of this report. It is not proposed to make any amendments at this point to the Member Allowance Scheme. However, this will be reviewed as part of the current review of the Member Allowance Scheme, with recommendations for a new Scheme due to be brought to the Authority in February.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

12. There are no specific equality or other impacts arising from the proposals contained in this paper.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13. The Authority is able to appoint substitute members to its committees from within the members of each political group. Appointing substitute members should assist in ensuring greater attendance and representation at Committee meetings.

OPTIONS

14. Option 1 (Recommended) – It is recommended that the Authority appoints substitute members (one each from the two political groups) to its two standing committees. It is also recommended that the Authority approves the consequential minor amendments to Standing Orders to ensure appropriate governance in respect of attendance of members when substituting at committee meetings.
15. Option 2 – That the Authority does not appoint substitute members.

RISK ANALYSIS

15. Option 1 ensures that the potential attendance and representation issues identified by members are addressed. It also ensures that appropriate governance is in place to ensure lawful decision making when substitute members attend meetings.
16. Option 2 would mean that the Authority continues to operate committee meetings without substitutes. This could lead to committee meetings having fewer members present and therefore being less representative of the Authority and its political groups.

CONCLUSION

17. Option 1 is recommended for the reasons outlined in the report above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

18. That the Authority appoints one substitute member from the Conservative Group and one substitute member from the Liberal Democrat group to the Standards and Governance Committee and to the 3SFire Stakeholder Committee.
19. That, the Authority approves the minor changes to Standing Orders set out at Appendix 1.
20. That the Authority notes Cllr Fairhurst's decision to step down as the Chair of the Standards and Governance Committee and appoints a new Chair to the Standards and Governance Committee and, if required, a new Vice Chair.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix 1 - Minor Amendments to Standing Orders

Contact: Paul Hodgson, Monitoring Officer
paul.hodgson@hants.gov.uk