
Governance Committee: Substitution on Select Committees

Background and context

- 1** The Governance Committee has considered whether a system of substitution should be established for Select Committees. The Council currently has substitution on the Planning and Rights of Way Committees to ensure that a quorum can be achieved in decision-making. If a member is unable to attend a committee meeting, a named substitute can attend in their place, with full voting rights, by notice to the Director of Law and Assurance.
- 2** The County Council operated a substitute system on its Select Committees from 2000 until it was abolished by the County Council in March 2005. At the time the use of substitutes for Select Committees, other than Health Scrutiny, was limited to those meetings considering call-in. The reason for the abolition of substitutes at that time was the difficulty of getting members to stand as substitutes and in finding substitutes available to attend a particular meeting.

Proposal

- 3** The Governance Committee has considered options for the reintroduction of substitutes at select committee meetings and recommends that there should be a mechanism of formal substitution.
- 4** It is proposed that there should be one named substitute per political group for each select committee. This means that, if a member of the Select Committee is unable to attend a meeting, the named member of their political group will be able to attend in their place. The substitute will have full speaking and voting rights. The substitute will receive papers for each meeting, irrespective of whether they were likely to be called on to substitute. The changes required to the Constitution are **set out at Appendix 1**.
- 5** The Committee supported the introduction of the new system with immediate effect after the Council meeting and nominations for substitutes will therefore be put forward for approval under item 10 on the agenda.

Recommended

That a system of formal substitutes be introduced for select committees, with one named member per political group for each committee, to be adopted with immediate effect, and that the required changes to the Constitution, as set out at Appendix 1, be approved.

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Background Papers None