

Report to	-	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date	-	18 March 2019
Report of the	-	Executive Director
Subject	-	Formal Substitute System for Committees

The Member Development Task Group meeting held on 26 November 2018, considered a report on the Group's Terms of Reference which resulted in a discussion on the introduction of a formal substitute system being introduced at Rother District Council.

Under Article 15 of the Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) has a duty to monitor and review the operation of the Constitution. Any proposal to introduce a formal substitute system will need to be considered by the OSC and recommended to Cabinet and approved by full Council before such a system can be introduced.

The relevant minute extract and recommendation is reproduced below for Members' consideration. The OSC are requested to agree whether a review should be undertaken, and if so, the timescale for the review, taking into account the current Work Programme and officer availability to undertake the review.

Recommendation: It be **RESOLVED:** That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be requested to undertake a review of a substitute system for formal committees within their Work Programme under "Items for Consideration".

9. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

Members gave consideration to the Task Group's Terms of Reference (ToR) which was last considered in June 2017 and had been appended to the report. It was considered timely to review the current ToR given that the elections would be taking place next May 2019. The Democratic Services Manager advised that one amendment had been made regarding officer membership which had changed in 2018 as a result of the resignation of the Service Manager – Corporate and Human Resources.

The Task Group agreed that the substitute system worked well and enabled all Groups to be effectively represented at the meetings. Members suggested that this arrangement be considered and introduced for formal committee meetings as operated within other Councils. A formal substitute system allowed each political group serving on Councils to retain their vote, should a substantive committee Member be unable to attend. However, this would also require all substitute Members to be fully trained, particularly for the regulatory committees; it might also be more crucial for those Councils where there was no large political majority. The Democratic Services Manager advised that she was aware that other East Sussex authorities operated formal substitute systems and that is was a constitutional matter for the Council to formally approve and adopt. Members agreed that the Overview

and Scrutiny Committee be requested to undertake a review of a substitute system for formal committees within their Work Programme under “Items for Consideration”.

The Task Group agreed the ToR and noted that they would be subject to further review by the newly elected Task Group at their first meeting in June 2019.

ACTION 5: That the Terms of Reference be noted and subject to further review by the newly elected Task Group at their first meeting in June 2019.
(LC / JH)

Dr Anthony Leonard
Executive Director