

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SELECTION AND MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Selection and Member Services Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 1 December 2022.

PRESENT: Mr N J Collor (Chairman), Mr R W Gough, Mr A J Hook, Mr C Simkins, Dr L Sullivan, Mr B J Sweetland and Mr D Jeffrey (Substitute)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr B Watts (General Counsel), Mrs K Goldsmith (Research Officer - Overview and Scrutiny), Ms L Adam (Scrutiny Research Officer), J Kennedy-Smith (Scrutiny Research Officer) and Ms S Connelly

IN ATTENDANCE VIRTUALLY: Mr R Lehmann

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

13. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item)

Apologies were received from Mr Dance for whom Mr Jeffrey was present. Mr Lehmann was in attendance, virtually.

14. Declarations of Interest

(Item)

There were no declarations of interest.

15. Minutes

(Item 3)

The draft minutes from 26 June 2022 were to be brought to the next meeting for Members' consideration.

16. Appointment of Parent Governor Representative

(Item 4)

1) Joel Cook, Democratic Services Manager, outlined the report. Members were advised that a full recruitment process had been undertaken, including an election as there had been a number of applicants for the role of Parent Governor Representative. The vacancy had arisen as the previous Parent Governor Representative had taken up a post at a KCC maintained school, which excluded them from continuing.

It was noted that the Parent Governor Representative would be a member of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee in addition to the Scrutiny Committee.

2) Dr Sullivan requested that the supporting statement was circulated to members of the Selection and Member Services Committee.

3) RESOLVED to agree to:

a) confirm the appointment of Rebecca Ainslie-Malik as Parent Governor representative on the Scrutiny Committee for a four-year term.

17. Outside Bodies update - Cranbrook School Trust

(Item 5)

1) Joel Cook, Democratic Services Manager, outlined the report.

2) RESOLVED to agree the recommendations:

(a) Allowing one seat, currently allocated to KCC under the School's Trust Deed but as yet not taken up, to be filled by a non-KCC person nominated by the Trust.

(b) Delegate authority, in consultation with the Chair of Selection and Member Services Committee (and Chief Whip where appropriate) to the Democratic Services Manager, to implement this decision and update and manage the Outside Body Appointment lists to align confirmed appointments with existing Outside Body membership arrangements.

18. Member Remuneration Panel Update

(Item 6)

1) Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer, outlined the report.

2) Further to questions and comments from Members, it was noted:

- It had been Kent County Council's practice to agree member remuneration after the election, with the Panel's report being made in the pre-election period. However, this meant that where group leaders were no longer elected in a new term, newly elected group leaders did not always have experience of what they were being asked to consider.
- Efforts had been made to make the process more 'automatic', moving away from the idea of Members 'voting for their own pay'. It was felt that the process needed to be as rational and detached as possible.
- It was acknowledged that the issue of member remuneration was highly politicised. It was suggested that the government prescribing remuneration in line with the size of the authority would resolve the issues around Members setting their own allowances.

Ben Watts, General Counsel, said that he was not aware of any government plans to address setting Members' allowances.

3) RESOLVED to request that a further report be brought to the committee containing further information, including an appendix regarding job descriptions for SRAs.

19. Combined Member Grants

(Item 7)

- 1) Lizzy Adam, Operations & Client Relationship Manager outlined the report.
- 2) A question was asked in relation to the Covid-19 Recovery Grants which were given to Members and how these were used. It was agreed that this information would be published on the website and be brought to a future meeting.
- 3) RESOLVED to note the grant recipient list, agree the format of the Combined Member Grants list for the period 2021/22 and approve upload to the KCC website

20. Governance Update

(Item 8)

- 1) Ben Watts, General Counsel, gave a governance update to Members. Work was being done around informal governance and the 'lead-in' procedures for formal decision-making. Reports were to be brought to the committee in relation to these areas of work.
- 2) A request had been made by Mr Hood, the leader of the Green and Independents Group that a seat be added to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee. It had been requested that this be raised at Selection and Member Services Committee. However, this was a matter for the Leader of the Council's and Executive's consideration.
- 3) Members explored the procedural arrangements relating to 'visiting or guest members' and rights of Members to speak at meetings where they did not hold a seat on the Committee. Officers clarified that the constitution made clear that the chair of a committee meeting retained discretion as to if and when visiting Members may be able to speak on items and that the Constitution also set out the powers of the chair to make relevant arrangements to facilitate effective meetings. Members were advised that the Constitution set out the expectation was that visiting Members should normally be permitted to speak, however Committee chairs could make specific arrangements relating to how often, on how many items and for how long visiting Members may speak in the relevant circumstances.

RESOLVED that the update be noted.