

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 1st March 2018

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR DECISION**

PROPOSED NEW CO-OPTED MEMBERS – RESIDENTS BOARD PANEL

1 Purpose of Report

This report seeks approval for the appointment of non-voting co-opted members to the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel. These members will represent the Residents Board Panel if appointed; initially, the individuals concerned will be Morris Sless, Paul Fuller and Trevor Pollard.

2 Recommendations

That representatives of the Residents Board Panel be appointed to the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel as non-voting co-opted members.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

3.1 The Council's decision-making and the effective scrutiny of it underpins the delivery of all the Joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy priorities. The Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel is part of the scrutiny system at Slough Borough Council (SBC), which meets the local authority's statutory requirement to provide public transparency and accountability, ensuring the best outcomes for the residents of Slough.

3.2 The work of the Panel reflects the following priority of the Five Year Plan:

- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit.
- Our residents will have access to good quality homes.

3.3 Overview and Scrutiny is a process by which decision-makers are accountable to local people, via their elected representatives for improving outcomes relating to all priorities for the Borough and its residents. Scrutiny seeks to influence those who make decisions by considering the major issues affecting the Borough and making recommendations about how services can be improved.

4 **Legal, Human Rights and Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial implications specific to the recommendations in this report.

(b) **Risk Management**

There are no specific risks associated with this report.

(c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

The Local Government Act 2000 (Section 21 Subsection 10) stipulates that “an overview and scrutiny committee of a local authority... may include persons who are not members of the authority, but... any such persons are not entitled to vote at any meeting of such a committee”. As a result, the proposal is for the nominated representatives to be appointed as a non-voting co-opted member.

(d) **Equalities Impact Assessment**

There is no identified need for the completion of an EIA in relation to this report.

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 Further to the legislation mentioned in section 4c of this report, SBC’s Constitution Part 4.5 (Sections 3.1 – 3.2) allows for all four scrutiny committees to appoint up to six non-voting co-opted members.
- 5.2 The Constitution also specifies that the relevant Panel making the appointment must take a vote on the nominations. This vote should bear in mind “the positive input an individual or organisation may make to the scrutiny process”. Given this, Morris Sless, Paul Fuller and Trevor Pollard have been nominated as a representatives of the Residents Board Panel.
- 5.3 The Residents Board Panel has been established in order to give residents in Slough the ability to influence and be involved in decision making in the town. The Board Panel represents residents from across the Borough. As a result, the creation of positions on the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel would be consistent with this objective.
- 5.4 The Resident Board Panel have been chosen as the body to be represented given their experience in supporting SBC’s housing efforts. During the last 12 months, they have monitored the commissioning of the new contract with Osborne Property Services Ltd. They were also involved in the review and approval of operational policies, ensuring that residents’ services improved (e.g. smoother access to properties to carry out gas safety checks, better management of Introductory Tenancies). Throughout this, the commitment of residents to these efforts and the challenge they provide to our proposals and policies has helped shape the service.

5.5 The nominees have had a diverse range of responsibilities in this process, and therefore can contribute knowledge and experience in a variety of areas. These responsibilities were as follows:

- Paul Fuller Board and Consultative Group Member
- Trevor Pollard Resident Consultative Group and Repairs & Maintenance Panel Member
- Morris Sless Board Member and Repairs & Maintenance Panel Member

5.6 Given the nature of Resident Board Panel's remit, the nominees may have to be replaced should the circumstances of these individuals change. However, the Panel is also asked to make the appointment an on-going one, with suitable nominees to be appointed once replacements are required.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

This report is not being considered by any other committees. However, should the proposal be accepted then notification will be given to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

7. **Conclusion**

The appointments will increase the diversity of viewpoints included in the Panel's membership. It will also support the aim of ensuring that the voice of service users is central in improving local provision.

8. **Appendices**

None.