

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP
Meeting: FALKIRK COUNCIL
Date: 20 June 2012
Author: CHIEF GOVERNANCE OFFICER

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides Council with a breakdown of membership on the Education Committee and seeks to make appointments to the Committee in advance of its first meeting in August 2012.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As noted in my report to the meeting of Council on 18 May 2012, the Education Committee has special characteristics, both in terms of the breadth of its membership and in the fact that some of the non-elected members have full voting status on the committee.
- 2.2 Section 124 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 requires local authorities appointing an education committee to include certain representatives of churches and denominational bodies among the membership. The Act also empowers local authorities to have a wider non-councillor membership on the education committee than would be permitted for other committees.
- 2.3 The obligation on the Council is to appoint three religious representatives to the committee. These representatives have the same status on the committee as elected members. This includes the ability to move and second motions and to vote.
- 2.4 Council has resolved previously to have three further categories of members on the committee. They are often referred to as co-opted members although in the strict sense they are appointed rather than co-opted. The categories are: teacher representatives, parent representatives and pupil representatives. These members do not have voting rights.
- 2.5 The convention has been that any appointments are for the lifetime of the Committee. This would normally be until the next local government elections unless the Committee's place in the Council's decision making structure is changed in the meantime. An exception is for the pupil representatives who are elected to serve for a period of 2 years to allow for those nominated to serve during their fifth and sixth years at school.

3. RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATIVES

- 3.1 The obligation on the Council is to appoint three persons representative of churches and denominational bodies in the council area. The Act states that these representatives should be selected as follows:-
- (a) one representative of the Church of Scotland, nominated in such manner as may be determined by the General Assembly of the Church;
 - (b) one representative of the Roman Catholic Church, nominated in such manner as may be determined by the Scottish Hierarchy of the Church; and
 - (c) one person selected by the authority having regard to the comparative strength within the Council area of all the churches and denominational bodies having duly constituted charges or other regularly appointed places of worship there.
- 3.2 The Church of Scotland and The Roman Catholic Church have both nominated their previous representatives, Mrs Margaret Coutts and Mr George Boyle.
- 3.3 Since 2004, the third representative on the Committee has been Rev Michael Rollo, representing the Evangelical/Pentecostal group of churches. This is in line with the statistical information available from the 2001 census which indicates that the Christian Churches other than the Church of Scotland and Roman Catholic Church are the next most significant in terms of religious affiliation in the area. Although a further census was conducted in 2011, it is not anticipated that the information on religious affiliation will be published until next year. There is no indication that there will be any significant changes in the information when it is published. Rev Rollo represents a significant strand in this group of Christian Churches. He is a very experienced member of the Committee and has indicated that he would be willing to continue in his role as religious representative. In these circumstances, it is suggested that he be reappointed.
- 3.4 Religious representatives have the same status on the Committee as elected members, including the ability to move and second motions and to vote.

4. OTHER APPOINTED MEMBERS

Teacher Representatives

- 4.1 Currently there is provision for two teachers to serve on the Committee. They are chosen by a ballot of serving teachers from schools in the Falkirk Council area. The most recent process in 2012 produced two nominations avoiding the need to conduct a ballot. The nominations are Ms Fiona Craig and Ms Margaret Smith.

Parent Representatives

- 4.2 The Parents' Forum has nominated Ms Jude Ainsley and Mr Martin Craigen as the parent representatives on the Education Committee. Ms Ainsley was a member of the Committee in the last session. Mr Craigen is a new nomination.

Pupil Representatives

- 4.3 The current pupil representatives are Aimee Rattray and Andrew Smith. Andrew has now left school. The Pupil Council has nominated Marnie McKay, a pupil at Larbert High to be the second pupil representative in his place.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that Council agrees to make the following appointments to the Education Committee:-

- (a) to appoint Margaret Coutts, George Boyle and the Rev Michael Rollo as representatives on the Education Committee in accordance with s.124 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973;
- (b) to appoint Fiona Craig and Margaret Smith as teacher representatives;
- (c) to appoint Jude Ainsley and Martin Craigen as parent representatives, and
- (d) to appoint the new pupil representative Marnie McKay.

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Chief Governance Officer
Date: 11 June 2012

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL