

**Report of East North East Area Leader**

**Report to Inner East Area Committee**

**Date: 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011**

**Subject: Review of process for electing Area Committee co-opted representatives**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Burmantofts & Richmond Hill	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Area Committee with the outcome of a review of the election process for the co-optee representing Richmond Hill Forum.

**Recommendations**

The Area Committee is recommended to :

Accept the conclusions of the Area Leader that the election process was conducted in an appropriate way, and the result of the election stands.

Adopts the process followed as a formal procedure for electing co-opted representatives.

## **Purpose of this report**

1. The purpose of this report is to respond to concerns raised regarding the process of nominating and voting for a co-opted representative to the Inner East Area Committee by the Richmond Hill Community Forum on 13 June.

## **Background information**

2. The Inner East Area Committee agreed at its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011 to invite the Community Leadership Teams and Community Forums to nominate a representative to be co-opted onto the Area Committee in accordance with Article 10 of the Council's Constitution.
3. The criteria for becoming a co-optee is that they :
  - Live or work within an East Leeds forum or community leadership team area
  - Are willing to support the ethos of Area Management
  - Represent the interests of all individuals and organisations making up the community leadership team or forum that they represent
  - Do not act to further their own interests to benefit self / or own organisation without regard for the best interests of the community leadership team or forum that they represent.
4. Residents of Richmond Hill were given the opportunity to select a representative at the Richmond Hill Community Forum meeting which took place on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2011. At the meeting concerns were raised regarding how the voting was undertaken, therefore following the meeting the East North East Area Leader agreed to undertake a review of the election process.

## **Main issues**

5. The nomination for a co-optee to represent Richmond Hill was undertaken following the standard procedure used by the Community Leadership Teams and the Community Forums within Inner East Leeds. This is attached at Appendix A to this report.
6. Information about becoming a co-optee was included with the papers for the Richmond Hill forum which were sent out on Thursday 19 May. Residents who wished to be nominated as a co-optee needed to be proposed and seconded; they were required to complete a form with these details and return it to the Area Management Office by Friday 3 June 2011. Two nominations were received.
7. At the forum meeting on 13 June, residents attending the forum were asked to sign in and those with a Richmond Hill postcode were given a ballot paper. 39 voting papers were allocated. The two candidates gave an overview of their roles within the community and then votes were cast by secret ballot. The ballot box was observed to ensure that residents only had one vote each. There was no voting by post or by proxy allowed.

8. Once all votes were cast a count took place. Of the 39 cards distributed, 38 were returned. The result of the election was:  
  
Candidate A: 26 votes  
Candidate B: 12 votes.
9. The vote was independently reviewed by the local Police Inspector to ensure that all votes had been counted properly and that the number of voting cards allocated matched up to the number of local residents in attendance.
10. The Area Leader has examined the paperwork and spoken to the two council officers in attendance at the forum. He is satisfied that the election process was appropriate, transparent and fair.
11. Appendix A shows the process followed, and it is recommend that the Area Committee adopts this formally as the procedure for electing co-opted representatives.

## **Corporate Considerations**

### **Consultation and Engagement**

12. The Area Committee were consulted on their requirement for co-optees for the 2011/12 municipal year at the meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March and invited the Community Leadership Teams and Community Forums to nominate one representative each.

### **Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

13. Community co-optees represent the interests of the local community which they are appointed by. Anyone resident in the area of benefit is eligible to vote for a co-optee.

### **Council Policies and City Priorities**

14. Co-optees are nominated to represent the Community Leadership Teams and Forums within the Inner East Area. This supports the Community Engagement Strategy for Inner East Leeds.

### **Resources and Value for Money**

15. There are no resource implications.

### **Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

16. The Area Committee Procedure Rules (Part 4 of the constitution "Rules of Procedure"), state that:
  - Each Area Committee may select up to five co-opted members to assist in the discharge of Committee's role, in accordance with Article 10 of the Constitution,
  - Co-opted members may participate in the debate in the same way as Elected Members but have no voting rights.
  - No co-opted member shall be appointed beyond the next Annual Meeting of the

Council. In other words, the appointments are annual, but people can be re-appointed by the organization they represent or by invitation of the Area Committee itself.

### **Risk Management**

17. There are no significant risks identified.

### **Conclusions**

18. Richmond Hill Forum was invited to nominate a co-opted community representative to the Inner East Area Committee. In response to a query from a local resident the East North East Area Leader undertook a review of the process. The Area Leader concluded that the process was appropriate, transparent and fair.

### **Recommendations**

19. The Area Committee is recommended to :

Accept the conclusions of the Area Leader that the election process was conducted in an appropriate way, and confirm that the result of the election stands.

Adopts the process followed, Appendix A, as a formal procedure for electing co-opted representatives.

### **Background documents**

Report to the Inner East Community Engagement Strategy, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011

Minutes of the Richmond Hill Forum meeting 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2011