

Council, 6 December 2011

Succession planning for Chairs of Committees

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

At the Council away day held on 19-20 October 2011, a workshop on governance was held and one of the main issues arising from discussion was that HPC needed to have a policy in place for succession planning for Chairs of Committees. This paper sets out a proposed policy to address this issue.

In addition, the paper proposes an additional step in the process for the election of Chairs.

Decision

Council are invited to discuss the document and agree to adopt the policy appended, including the revision to the process for the election of Chairs of Committees.

Background information

A process for the election of Chairs of Committees was agreed by Council on July 2005.

Resource implications

None.

Financial implications

Any training will be covered within the Council training budget.

Appendices

- (i) Draft Policy on succession planning for Chairs; and
- (ii) Process for the election of Chairs of Committees agreed by Council on July 2005.

Date of paper

7 November 2011.

Succession planning for Committee Chairs

Introduction

The purpose of a succession planning policy is to provide Council with a process to manage succession planning and effectively fill the positions of Chairs of HPC's Committees. It also ensures continuity in the process.

This policy relates to Chairs of Committees and does not relate to succession planning in terms of the composition of and appointment to Council.

Background

The role of a Committee Chair is to:

- approve draft agendas and approve draft minutes for the committee;
- consult the Committee Secretary for advice as needed;
- manage the efficient and effective running of meetings by grasping the detail of a wide range of business, and contribute to objective decision making by exercising sound judgement;
- facilitate open discussion, and good decision-making;
- ensure that the meeting is conducted in accordance with the standing orders, and that all members keep to the code of conduct; and
- act as spokesperson for the committee if required.

Policy

HPC endeavours to conduct all business in an open and transparent manner and this approach should also apply to succession planning.

There are two stages in succession planning for Chairs of Committees:-

- (1) We would encourage open discussions to be held with the Council Chair during the course of the appraisal process which happens in January of each year. This is an opportunity for members of Council to indicate that they would be seeking a role as Chair in the future. Since training objectives are devised as part of the appraisal, this is an opportunity to document, if appropriate, that training relating to Chairing Skills is required to ensure that the member is equipped with the skills to fulfil the role of a committee chair;

This is also an opportunity for existing chairs to discuss their term as Chair and whether they would be seeking reappointment at the end of their two year term.

- (2) The second part of the process is to encourage open discussions with colleagues to alert them that you are interested in taking up a role as Chair of a Committee in future. This could also include an informal discussion with the current chair who could advise on exactly what the role entails and their views on your suitability for the role.

It should be noted that this is an open, transparent process and the decision relating to the appointment of Chairs remains in the gift of Council who are asked to ratify the nomination of a Committee.

Election of Chairs of Committees

The process for the election of a chair to a Committee is as follows:-

- The Secretary to Committee places an item on the agenda of the first meeting (usually in September each year) to nominate a Chair;
- Members of the Committee are asked to submit expressions of interest by e-mail to the Committee Secretary in advance of the meeting;
- At the first meeting of the Committee, the Secretary to Committee reads out the expression(s) of interest received;
- The Committee are then asked to nominate members accordingly;
- In the event that only one member is nominated, a paper will be submitted to the next meeting of Council detailing the name of the person nominated as Chair of the Committee and seeking ratification by Council;
- In the event that more than one person is nominated, Committee are given the opportunity to come to an agreement as to the name of the individual to be submitted to Council for appointment as Chair. A paper will be then submitted to the next meeting of Council detailing the name of the person nominated as Chair of the Committee and seeking ratification by Council;
- If the Committee cannot agree on a single nomination, then a paper is submitted to the next meeting of Council outlining the names of those candidates nominated and a secret ballot will be conducted by the Secretary of the Council among the members of Council present;
- Before the ballot is conducted, each candidate will be given the opportunity, if they so wish, to address the Council for not more than five minutes;
- The members nominated may scrutinise the ballot process or appoint another member to do so on their behalf;
- The Registrar, or in his absence the Secretary to Council, will announce the result of the ballot to the meeting and the winning candidate will be appointed as Chair.
- The term of office of Chair is two years.