

LB Bromley Constitution Appendix 9. GUIDANCE TO CO-OPTED MEMBERS

1. The majority of people who sit on Council Committees are elected by local residents. However, some people can be directly appointed by the Council. These are known as co-opted members.
2. Some times an appointment is made because it is required by law. For example, between 2 – 5 parent governor representatives must be appointed to the Council's Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee which deals with education matters. Where an appointment is required by law, there will usually be a prescribed and formal election or appointment process.
3. However, most co-opted members are appointed because they can bring expertise or an additional perspective to the work of the Council. There is local choice on how most co-opted members are selected and appointed.
4. The majority of co-opted members can take part in discussions at meetings but can not be allowed to propose or second a motion or to cast a vote. However some co-opted members will have voting rights. If you are appointed as a co-opted member, you should check whether or not you have voting rights.
5. Co-opted members who have a right to vote must comply with the Members' Code of Conduct. This means that you must complete a Register of Interest form which will give information on your employment, properties you own in the borough and societies, charities, etc., that you are involved in.
6. It also means that you must comply with rules which aim to make sure you do not have a conflict of interest with the business of the Committee you sit on at the Council. Some times you will be able to declare an interest and take part in meetings, otherwise your conflict of interest may stop this happening. You will also be subject to formal disciplinary procedures which may lead to your disqualification as a co-opted member if you breach the rules.
7. Before accepting the post of a co-opted member with voting rights you should familiarise yourself with your obligations under the Code of Conduct. The Council's Monitoring Officer can assist.
8. If you do not have voting rights, you will be encouraged to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct, although if the Committee feels that you should not take part in the meeting because of the conflict of interest, you may be excluded from that part of the meeting.
9. Members who are co-opted on to a Committee on a permanent basis have the following rights regardless of whether they are allowed to vote:

- 9.1 A right to attend meetings of the committee and take part in discussions as long as you don't have a conflict of interest;
 - 9.2 A right to sit in the meeting, even for confidential items provided they do not have a conflict of interest. Co-opted members must not use any information they obtain in confidential sessions for personal gain, neither must they disclose it to any third party;
 - 9.3 The right to background documents to help you understand the issues before the Committee. This may allow you to see some documents which are not available to members of the public, subject to the same criteria set out in paragraph 9.2 above.
10. If you are a co-opted member with voting rights, you can propose and second motions and vote on matters at the Committee.
 11. You do not have any rights to attend other Committees or meetings of the Council except for the Committee you have been co-opted on to, nor do you have rights to see background papers for other meetings over and above the rights of members of the public.
 12. If you are co-opted to a Member Working Group or for a time limited matter, then your rights only exist for that matter or for the period you are co-opted.