

Edinburgh Prison Visiting Committee – Appointment of Members for 2003/07

City of Edinburgh Council

22 May 2003

Purpose of report

- 1 To invite the Council to consider the arrangements for appointing members to the Edinburgh Prison Visiting Committee (EPVC).

Details

- 2 In terms of The Prisons and Young Offenders Institutions (Scotland) Amendment Rules 1996, the Council appoints ten members to the EPVC of whom at least four must not be members of the Council. The appointments must be made by 1 July (two months from the date of the elections).
- 3 In 1998, the Association of Visiting Committees for Scottish Penal Establishments recommended to appointing authorities that they consider opening up membership of Visiting Committees by appointing members of the public, following press advertisement.
- 4 In May 1999, the Council agreed to appoint five members of the Council to the EPVC, to offer two places to the Scottish Borders Council and to fill the remaining three places following public advertisement. The membership of the EPVC until 30 June 2003 is: -

Edinburgh Councillors Burns, Lowrie and Marshall;

former Councillors Morton and Mrs Sleigh,


former Scottish Borders Councillors Hewat and Evans; and

Mr B Logan, Mr G Allan and Ms M McGregor who were appointed following public advertisement.
- 5 On 10 April 2003, the Council authorised me to advertise for members of the public to express an interest in being appointed as members of the Edinburgh Prison Visiting Committee for the four year period to June 2007. To date, 25 information packs had been issued and 12 applications received. These include three existing members, former Councillors Morton and Mrs Sleigh and Mr B Logan.

- 6 The former Borders Regional Council had direct appointment rights prior to the reorganisation of Local Government in 1996, but these rights were removed at that time. The former Policy and Resources Committee agreed to offer the Scottish Borders Council two places on the EPVC in recognition of the previous arrangement.
- 7 It is for the Council to determine the manner in which appointments to the EPVC are made, subject to the stipulation that at least 4 must not be serving elected members of the Council.
- 8 If the Council wishes to appoint additional members of the public, an appointment panel will be required to conduct interviews and make a recommendation to the meeting of the Council on 26 June 2003 on filling the places. On the last occasion, ex-councillors Hewat and Morton, and Dr David Colvin conducted the interviews.
- 9 Advice received from the Scottish Prison Service is that all persons appointed by the Council will require to receive a satisfactory "standard Disclosure" from Disclosure Scotland, who provide checks on the criminal records of persons being considered for appointment to sensitive positions, such as membership of Prison Visiting Committees.

Recommendations

- 10 That the Council: -
 - 1) determine how many, if any, nominations are to be sought from the Scottish Borders Council;
 - 2) determine how many of the balance are to be filled by direct appointment and how many, if any, following interviews and a recommendation from an interview panel;
 - 3) make the direct appointments; and
 - 4) if interviews are to be conducted, determine the composition of the interview panel.


Jim Inch
Director of Corporate Services
14/05/03

Appendices None.

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Wards affected None.

**Background
Papers** None.