

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Director of Corporate Services

Council: 26 October 2011

Subject: Representation on HMP Low Moss - Visiting Committee

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The Council is asked to consider making nominations to the HMP Low Moss - Visiting Committee.

2. Background

- 2.1** A request has been received from the Scottish Prison Service seeking the nomination of two elected members and two non elected members to serve on the HMP Low Moss – Visiting Committee.
- 2.2** In August 2010, the Scottish Prison Service advised of the statutory requirement for a Visiting Committee to be formed at the new prison being built near Bishopbriggs – HMS Low Moss, and consulted with the relevant local authorities on the proposed Visiting Committee representation from each Council. The proposed Visiting Committee membership was based on a proportionate representation from each Council based on the projected prisoner population demographic.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** It has now been established that this Council is required to nominate two elected members and two non-elected members to serve on the Visiting Committee. It is proposed that officers advertise in the local press to attract applications from members of the public who are interested in this voluntary work and report back to Council with recommendations.
- 3.2** The Scottish Prison Service has requested details of the Council's nominees by no later than mid December 2011, as induction training will commence in January 2012.

4. People Implications

- 4.1** There are no implications for employees of the Council.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The representatives nominated to serve on this outside body will be entitled to claim reasonable expenses incurred when attending meetings from the Secretary of State. Therefore there are no financial implications for this Council.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** There is a risk that the Council might incur reputational damage if it does not fill these vacancies.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 7.1** The issues raised within this report will not have an adverse impact on any equality group.

8. Strategic Assessment

- 8.1** The role of the Visiting Committee is to ensure that the conditions within the prison contribute to a safe, humane and decent environment in which prisoners' rights are respected and where they are provided with opportunities to prepare for release in ways likely to reduce re-offending. Therefore the role of the Visiting Committee fits well with the Council's strategic priorities as any reduction in re-offending should result in fewer crimes and safer streets.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 9.1** The Council is asked:-

- (a) to nominate two elected members to serve on the HMP Low Moss – Visiting Committee; and
- (b) to instruct officers to place an advert in the local press for two non elected members to represent West Dunbartonshire Council on the Visiting Committee and report back to the Council with recommendations.

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Executive Director of Corporate Services
Date: 22 September 2011

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: letter received from James Chisholm, Scottish Prison Service dated 21 September 2011

Wards Affected: None affected