

## **Health and Wellbeing Board**

**12 September 2016**

### **Health and Wellbeing Board - Membership**

#### **1. Purpose**

This report has been prepared at the request of the Chairman to seek the views of the Board on a suggested change to its composition to include representation from West Midlands Police and the West Midlands Fire Service and also to allocate an additional place to the Labour Group of the Council for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

#### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 The Board is requested to decide whether to approve changes to its composition to enable a voting place to be allocated to:

- A representative of West Midlands Police
- A representative of the West Midlands Fire Service
- One additional place to the Labour Group for the remainder of the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

#### **3. Report detail**

3.1 Requests have been received on a number of occasions from both the Police and Fire Services to become members of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Chairman considers that there is merit in this as both services are experienced in working with vulnerable, disengaged and seldom heard communities and can contribute valuable local intelligence to help the Board have a more comprehensive understanding of local population needs and solutions likely to meet those needs.

3.2 The Membership currently provides for three members of the Labour Group however, Council at its annual meeting appointed four representatives. As the four representatives have already attended meetings, the Chairman has asked if the Board would consider amending the composition to regularise this for the remainder of this Municipal Year (i.e. up to May 2017).

3.3 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 sets a core membership for the Board which formed the basis of the current membership however, the Health and Wellbeing Board can also, at any time, appoint additional members as it thinks fit. Regulations provide that the Board does not need to be politically balanced.

3.4 Nationally, Health and Wellbeing Boards vary in their size and composition depending upon the priorities of the area and what works for those Authorities locally. On a practical level, Boards should be satisfied that its membership is of a size that enables the Board to function effectively and that Board members should be sufficiently senior to be clear about the extent that they are empowered to make collective decisions with the rest of the board without having to constantly refer back to their organisations. (This should be borne in mind when making substitutions at meetings).

#### **4. Implications for Joint Working arrangements:**

The Health and Wellbeing Board has established a Strategic Advisory Group which engages providers and other public bodies more generally in an informal way and which enables more detailed discussion on specific themes. However closer partnership working with the Fire and Police services at a higher strategic level would better enable boards to access this source of local information and resources in order to learn what has or has not worked and improve services locally.

#### **5. Health and Wellbeing Priorities:**

- The West Midlands Fire Service has provided a briefing note to support its membership of the Board which addresses the benefits to health and wellbeing the service could bring. **Appendix A.**

#### **Background papers**

None

#### **Author**

Helen Owen  
Democratic Services Officer

☎ 654522

✉ [helen.owen@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:helen.owen@walsall.gov.uk)