

SOUTH EAST REGIONAL COUNCIL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES

CONSTITUTION

1. TITLE

The Regional Council will be called the South East Regional Council for Local Government Services (the "Regional Council").

2. AREA

The area covered by the Regional Council is the Counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey, East Sussex and West Sussex.

3. MEMBERSHIP

(a) The Regional Council shall consist of elected Councillors appointed by the local authorities in the Region (hereinafter called "the Employers"), and members appointed by and from the Trade Union Branches representing the employees they employ (the Trade Union side). Membership of the Regional Council is open only to Elected Members of the Councils of the Region which recognise the Trade Unions, and to Trade Union Officials currently employed by a Council within the Region, with the Joint Secretaries.

(b) The Employers' representatives shall be appointed from authorities in membership as follows:

County Councils 3 representatives

Unitary Councils

Population over 200,000 3 representatives

Population up to 200,000 2 representatives

District Councils

Population over 150,000 2 representatives

Population up to 150,000 1 representative

Police Authorities 1 representative

(c) The Trade Union representatives shall be appointed in the following proportions:

UNISON	44
TGWU	16
GMB	16

plus 1 representative who will be the Trade Union Side Secretary

(d) Any member may be represented at meetings of the Council by a substitute with full powers, provided that the substitute has been duly appointed;

(e) If any local authority or Trade Union fails to appoint the number of representatives provided by the Constitution, this will not make the decisions of the Council invalid.

4. MEMBERS TO RETIRE ANNUALLY

The members of the Regional Council shall retire on the day before the Annual Meeting each year, and shall be eligible for re-appointment.

No member of the Regional Council shall continue to sit on the Regional Council after he/she has ceased to be a member or employee of the body that appointed him/her or otherwise ceases to be eligible.

5. CASUAL VACANCIES

When a casual vacancy occurs, a new member shall be appointed by the body in whose representation the vacancy occurs, and shall sit until the end of the period for which his/her predecessor was appointed.

6. FUNCTIONS

The Regional Council will focus upon creating an education and development opportunity for both Elected Members and Trade Union Officials.

For all member local authorities in the Regional area, the Regional Council will:

- *promote co-operation between employers and recognised unions;*
- *make advice available on employer/employee relations, personnel, training and health and safety matters;*
- *assist employers and recognised unions in interpreting and applying national agreements;*
- *assist where requested in the resolution of disputes;*
- *work in partnership, especially in the promotion of learning and development for workforce development, including joint applications for funding to support initiatives for the benefits of member councils.*
- *discharge such other functions as may be delegated from the National Joint Council including:*
 - *agreeing arrangements for appropriate special allowances within the region*
 - *providing appropriate pay and grading appeals machinery for individual employees where this is provided for in their contract of employment or is part of the agreed appeals procedure of their employing authority*
 - *providing advice and assistance on development and training issues,*
 - *disseminating examples of good practice in employer/employee relations to Councils in the region.*

7. RECOMMENDATIONS TO NATIONAL COUNCIL

The Regional Council may make recommendations to the National Council.

8. SCOPE

In its seminars, workshops and joint discussions, the Regional Council will discuss and debate conditions of employment, employer/employee relations and employee training matters which are of interest to the Local Authorities and the Trade Unions.

9. CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER REGIONAL COUNCILS

The Council may co-operate with other Regional Councils and other organisations to deal with problems of common interest.

10. CONCILIATION

a) Conciliation Services for issues under National Conditions

Where there is a failure to agree between employers and employees within a local authority following negotiation on a matter relating to the provisions of Part 3 of the National Agreement on Conditions of Service either party may refer the matter to the Joint Secretaries who will provide a conciliation service.

b) Conciliation services for issues other than National Conditions

Where a difference exists between employers and employees within a local authority on an issue other than as specified in paragraph 10(a) above, which cannot be, or shows no prospect of being, settled at local level, the Joint Secretaries can provide:

- (i) conciliation over the differences within terms of reference agreed between the parties;
- (ii) where requested by both parties, make recommendations aimed at solving the difference
- (iii) Former 'Paragraph 80' grading appeals where there are no locally agreed arrangements.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

11. A REGIONAL JOINT COMMITTEE

(a) The Regional Council can establish annually a Regional Joint Committee. This will be convened if and when the Joint Secretaries agree that an exceptional situation has arisen to require it, and where any Joint Committee decision is agreed to be possibly influential.

(b) The Joint Committee requires 14 representatives of the Employers' Side, and 20 representatives of the Trades Union' Sides of the Regional Council. The allocation from the Trades Union Side shall be as follows:

UNISON	12
GMB	4
T&GWU	4

12. CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON

The Regional Council shall appoint a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. If the Chairperson is drawn from the Employers' side, the Vice-Chairperson shall be drawn from the Trades Union' side, or vice-versa. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be appointed for one year, and holding the offices will alternate between the two sides of the Council. The Chairperson, or in his or her absence, the Vice-Chairperson, shall preside at the meetings, and shall have a vote, but not a casting vote. In the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson at any meeting a Chairperson shall be elected to preside at such meeting. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall have the right to decide how they are addressed.

13. OFFICERS

The Regional Council may appoint a secretary or secretaries, treasurer or treasurers, and such other staff as it may think fit, on appropriate terms.

14. MEETINGS

The Annual Meeting of the Regional Council shall be held in July, by mutual agreement between the joint secretaries. Consideration to be given to including training and development in that day's programme.

In addition to the Annual Meeting, there is, in principle, commitment to holding 2 joint seminars per year in February and in October on mutually agreed topical issues relevant to the business of the Regional Council.

15. SPECIAL MEETINGS

A special meeting of the Regional Council shall be called if mutually agreed by the joint secretaries, within 28 days of their agreement.

16. VOTING

The voting both in the Regional Council and in any Committees shall be by a show of hands, unless the Regional Council decides otherwise. No resolution shall be regarded as carried unless it has been approved by a simple majority of the members present on each side, voting separately.

17. QUORUM

The quorum shall be one quarter of the representatives of the Employers' and Trade Union Sides respectively. The quorum of a committee shall, subject to any directions given by the Council, be determined by the Committee.

18. FINANCE

The administrative expenses of the Regional Council shall be met in agreed proportions by the Employers and Trade Unions.

19. AUDIT

The accounts of the Regional Council shall be audited by auditors appointed by the Regional Council, and the audited accounts shall be forwarded to the constituent local authorities and Trade Unions.

20. MINUTES

Copies of the minutes of all meetings of the Regional Council shall be forwarded to the Secretary or Joint Secretaries of the National Council, and to all constituent members of the Regional Council.

21. AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

Any amendment of the constitution shall be made only by the Council. No amendment shall be made except after 14 days notice thereof has been given and the proposed amendment circulated on the agenda of the meeting at which it is to be considered.

22. INTERPRETATION

Where the context allows, the Interpretation Act 1889 shall apply to the foregoing provisions.

July 2007