



# Proposed changes to roles on Centre Councils

CIWM Volunteer Strategy 2024

## Background

Over the last two years CIWM has been investigating alternative options for delivering our volunteering experience to increase the benefits of volunteering both for the volunteers and the members. As part of this the Volunteer Strategy Steering Group have looked at all elements of the volunteering offer including the structures and processes that support it. This document outlines changes to one of those areas.

Any changes to the structures or processes which are outlined in CIWM Practice Directions can be changed by the CIWM Trustee Board (General Council). Any changes to the structures or processes which are outlined in other parts of the CIWM Constitution will be subject to a vote by members at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM).

## What are the current roles on Centre Council?

CIWM has ten Centre Councils across the UK and Ireland. They provide an extensive programme of webinars, events, site visits and support to members looking to upgrade and social events to members in their region. All CIWM Members automatically become a member of their local CIWM Centre when they join.

Centre Councils are made up of up to 18 individuals in official roles as outlined in the CIWM Constitution –

**Elected Centre Councillors** – these are Chartered, Fellow or Life members (also known as Full Members) and are nominated for their post by other Full Members. There are up to nine of these posts at any time. They are appointed between February and April each year and begin their posts at the Centre Annual General Meeting which usually takes place in late March to April. Usually three Elected Centre Councillors step down each year after completing a three year term. They can then be re-elected. An Elected Centre Councillor is chosen as the Chair of the Centre Council each year. Some Centres also have Deputy Chairs but this is not a role recognised in the Constitution.

**Ex-officio Centre Councillors** – these are CIWM Trustees (General Councillors) who are Members of the Centre. Trustees can decide not to take these posts if they wish. (For example if there are multiple Trustees in a region.)

**Honorary Centre Councillors** – these are Centre Councillors performing the specific roles of Honorary Centre Treasurer and Honorary Centre Secretary. If a Members Representative is not an Elected Centre Councillor they will automatically be an Honorary Centre Councillor. Centres can set up additional Honorary roles. These roles usually have 3 year terms and then can be re-elected.

**Co-opted Centre Councillors** – These are appointed by the Centre Council according to the needs of the Centre and have a one year term. They can then be appointed for a further two terms up to three years at which point they have to have a one year break.



Members can hold multiple posts in their Centre Council: for example, an Elected Centre Councillor can fulfil the role of Centre Secretary and an Honorary Centre Secretary can also be an Honorary Centre Treasurer.

Many Centres also have additional unofficial roles on Centre Council, which are not reflected in the Constitution, including Professional Network Coordinator and Observer.

Only Full Members can be Elected Centre Councillors and Full Members can always vote on items. Honorary Members and Co-opted Members can only vote if they are Full Members. Unofficial roles such as observers can never vote, even if they are Full Members.

The constitution requires that there are always an equal number of Elected Centre Councillors as any other formal Centre Council role. For instance, if there are the maximum number of Elected Centre Councillor at nine then there could only be up to nine Ex officio, Honorary and Co-opted Centre Councillors.

### Why is a change recommended?

Feedback gathered by the Volunteer Strategy steering group suggests that the current number and types of roles on the Centre Council is unnecessarily complex and makes it too difficult to bring people into the Centre Council. It embeds the view that Centre Councils are very focused on governance and administration, with unnecessary 'red tape' rather than being focused on delivery of member benefits and moving the sector forward.

There is a separate proposal regarding renaming the roles in Centre Council. This proposal has used the current names to allow members to consider each proposal separately.

### What are the suggested changes?

It is proposed that there will only be two types of Centre Councillor; an Elected Centre Councillor and a Non-Elected Centre Councillor.

- Elected Centre Councillors would always have to outnumber non-elected so if a Centre Council has seven Elected Centre Councillors they could only have six Non-Elected Centre Councillors.
- Elected Centre Councillors have to be Full members and the process to elect a Centre Councillor would be the current process with the same three year terms. However, we propose an edit to allow Retired Chartered and Retired Fellow members to support applications. As is currently the case there is no limit on how many times someone can be an Elected Centre Councillor.
- Non-Elected Centre Councillors can be any membership grade and a Centre could appoint Non-Elected Centre Councillors in anyway they see fit as long as they can show that they're aligned to CIWM's policies and codes of conduct.
- Non-Elected Centre Councillors would usually have a 12 month term and could then be reappointed, but Centres may choose to appoint people for longer terms of up to three years, for example to provide stability for the Centre Secretary role.



- Trustees (General Councillors) in the region would always be given a Non-Elected Centre Councillor role which they can decline if they wish and will retain their seat until the end of their Trustee term, unless they chose to stand down as a Centre Councillor
- All Centre Councillors would get a vote irrespective of their role and membership grade
- The constitution would still require that there be a named Chair, chosen from the Elected Centre Councillors, and a Treasurer and Secretary, who could be Elected or Non-Elected.
- Centres can choose whether to have an Elected or Non-Elected Centre Councillor in the role of Members' Representative.
- The Centre may decide to give some Centre Councillors specific roles, for example you might have an Elected Centre Councillor leading on events or a Non-Elected Centre Councillor leading on social media.
- There would still be a minimum of four Elected Centre Councillors but the maximum would be increased to 12 to allow Centre Councils to bring more people into roles if they wish.
- A Centre Council could still have Centre Council Observers that don't count to the total numbers - but a Centre Council Observer can only observe, not get involved in influencing the council.

### **What are the benefits of these changes?**

- Having only two groups of Centre Councillors – Elected and Non-Elected – and removing some of the very formal language simplifies the structure of Centre Councils, making them both easier to understand and easier to manage.
- It provides clarity of terms for all roles and allows Centre Councils to easily be able to create the roles they need to deliver their plans.
- By having flexibility in some of the roles, such as the use of specific roles such as social media lead, Centre Councils have the opportunity to target recruitment of volunteers to bring on specific skills.

### **What are the risks with these changes and how will these be mitigated?**

The number of roles is still quite complex compared to other professional bodies and so may not attract new people – there will be clear communications around the roles which will be focused on the benefits of volunteering rather than the process to try and make sure it's as simple as possible.

Some Centre Councillors are already comfortable with the current structure and so this might make it more complex as it will be completely new - all Centre Councillors will be consulted regarding the changes and if approved the result should be that everyone has



a simple system to understand. CIWM staff team will be able to help with queries as they do now.

### **How can I feedback my views on these proposals?**

Views can be emailed to [volunteers@ciwm.co.uk](mailto:volunteers@ciwm.co.uk) and these will then be shared with the steering group when they meet in December 2024.

### **What are the next steps?**

Once the Volunteer Strategy Steering Group have completed the consultation process they will determine whether to proceed with the proposals or to change them. Once the proposals are agreed these will either be planned for implementation or, if they require a vote of the members, an Extraordinary General Meeting will be held.