

Audit and Governance Committee

Review of Appointments to Outside Bodies



Date of meeting:	23 September 2019
Title of Report:	Review of Appointments to Outside Bodies
Lead Member:	Councillor Peter Smith (Deputy Leader)
Lead Strategic Director:	Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive)
Author:	Claire Daniells, Senior Governance Advisor
Contact Email:	Claire.daniells@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	CLD AGC 01
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

Plymouth City Council currently appoints representative members to 53 outside bodies. Outside bodies are organisations which are independent from the council, but have an impact on our services or help us to fulfil our responsibilities. Following the Annual General Meeting of Council in May 2019 it was evident that a review of the current list of outside bodies was required. This paper seeks agreement as to the principles for appointments to outside bodies, prior to undertaking a full review on the basis of those agreed principles. Processes and procedures for ensuring effective updating and management of membership of outside bodies going forward will also be revised and strengthened.

Recommendations and Reasons

The report recommends that:

- I. Audit and Governance committee approves the principles for appointments to outside bodies as follows:
 - a. Appointments to outside bodies are confirmed at the Annual General Meeting of Council each year, with the exception of appointments of Cabinet members to outside bodies which are confirmed by the Leader.
 - b. Responsibilities of councillors on outside bodies will depend on the type of body in which a member is involved. These appointments create obligations on the council and individual councillors, particularly where a councillor is asked to be a member or director of an outside body. Therefore consideration needs to be given to ensure these obligations are proportionate to the relationship between the Council and that outside body.
 - c. Appointments should be made based on the insight/connection that the appointee can bring, for instance some outside bodies are more relevant to

councillors of specific Wards. Consideration should be given as to whether a link or specific interest exists between the appointee and the outside body.

- d. There should be a memorandum of understanding between the outside body and the appointed representative so that each is aware of and understands their role and obligations. This could include a letter of appointment, provision of insurance cover, expectations as to attendance at meetings etc.
 - e. Where appropriate, outside bodies should be asked to provide suitable insurance cover for those appointed when acting on behalf of that organisation. This is particularly important where the councillor will be a director or trustee with statutory responsibilities and/or whether they may be taking financial or employment decisions on behalf of the outside body.
 - f. Members appointed to outside bodies should receive sufficient support from officers to ensure they have the information they need to maximise their contribution to these organisations.
 - g. Members on outside bodies should provide regular feedback to officers/Council as appropriate and for larger outside bodies and those of strategic importance, this may be by way of an annual or biannual report to a meeting of Full Council.
 - h. Consideration should be given as to whether an elected member is the most appropriate appointment or whether a Council officer could fulfil the role, especially where outside bodies do not have decision making powers.
 - i. Where councillors are invited to join an outside body, consideration should be given as to whether undertaking an alternative role as a 'friend' to the body could be more appropriate. This allows support for the outside body and its causes without legal responsibility. An outside body could also opt to appoint a 'Council Representative' to act as a liaison and point of contact for the body, without necessarily requiring full attendance at Board meetings.
2. Audit and Governance Committee establish a cross-party working group to review the current list of outside bodies, to include membership requirements, Terms of Reference, strategic fit, omissions and monitoring of membership requirements of outside bodies, in line with the principles as set out above.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The alternative considered was to take no action – this would not bring clarity to the current situation for either the outside bodies or the members involved and risks time and resources not being used as effectively as possible.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This activity supports the Council values of 'We are Democratic' in ensuring that representatives to outside bodies are appointed in line with the Terms of Reference of those bodies. It also supports the value of 'We are Co-Operative', helping to ensure we work together with our partners to serve the best interests of our city and its communities.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Support for the review of outside bodies will be met within existing budgets and resources.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

There are no significant environmental implications, although where appointments to an outside body are no longer required, this may reduce carbon footprint through travel.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

None identified

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Appendix I - Briefing report							
B	Appendix II – AGM Appointments 2019							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	19.20. 104	Leg	It/332 90/10 09	Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Siân Millard, Oversight and Governance Manager											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 12/09/2019											
Cabinet Member approval:											
											
Date approved: 11/09/2019											