

COUNCIL

23 MARCH 2022

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Council of changes required to the allocation of Committee seats between political groups as a result of the Redhill by-election. Approval is sought to a number of proposed changes to various committees together with some changes required to outside bodies that are unrelated to the outcome of the by-election.
- 1.2 The full list of appointments to committees and outside bodies will be published on the Council's website in the Yearbook at <https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/committees/cm55/PublicDocuments.aspx> following the meeting.

2.0 Changes to Appointments on Committees

- 2.1 A review of the political balance of the Council to ensure places on Committees are allocated in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements has been undertaken, following the recently held by-election in the Redhill ward, at which Councillor Usher was elected. Councillor Usher has joined the Labour group on the Council and members are advised that some changes to the allocation of seats between the political groups are required as a result.
- 2.2 Council is requested to note Councillor Usher's appointment to the North Sunderland Area Committee as a Redhill Ward member.
- 2.3 As a result of the by-election the changes are as follows:-
- **Licensing and Regulatory Committee** – the seat held by the Wearside Independent member (Councillor Bewick) is now allocated to the Majority Group.
 - **Homelessness Appeals Panel** – the seat held by the former member, Councillor Jenkins of the Wearside Independents Group, is allocated to the Liberal Democrat Group.
 - **Appeals Panel** - the seat held by the former member, Councillor Jenkins of the Wearside Independents Group, is allocated to the Majority Group.

3.0 Port Board – Co-Opted Members

- 3.1 The Council is requested to consider appointments to the two vacancies for co-opted members on the Port Board.
- 3.2 The Port Board was originally established in 2010 as a non-executive committee of Full Council in accordance with the Department for Transport's ("DfT") then guidance for municipal ports contained in "*Opportunities for Ports in Local Authority Ownership*" (2006). The current Port Board structure is based on the harbour management committee model that was recommended by the DfT at that time as the best practice governance model for in-house local authority owned ports.
- 3.3 The DfT has subsequently issued updated guidance in relation to port governance arrangements which applies to all statutory harbour authorities ("SHAs"). These include the Council and other municipal ports, plus trust ports and certain private ports (*Ports Good Governance Guidance 2018*). This replaces the previous 2006 guidance. Whilst this guidance is not legally binding, it is recommended good practice and all SHAs are expected to carefully consider it and implement its principles (if these are not already in place), unless this is considered impractical or inappropriate based on local circumstances. Where a SHA decides not to comply with the 2018 Guidance, it is stated that the relevant SHA should clearly state the reasons why publicly.
- 3.4 The DfT's 2018 Guidance reaffirms that the existing harbour management committee model, namely a specific Council committee comprising a majority of elected members plus external appointees with suitable and valuable skills and experience (based on the requirements of the relevant port), continues to be the recommended model as to how good practice corporate governance principles can be applied to local authority ports.
- 3.5 There are currently two external vacancies on the Port Board following the departure at the end of 2019 of the two previous co-opted members who had served on the Port Board for almost ten years.
- 3.6 An external recruitment exercise, supported by specialist recruitment consultant, has been undertaken to seek two new co-opted member appointees based on an up-to-date role profile. As a result of this process, it is recommended that the following two candidates are appointed to the Port Board for a three-year term.
- 3.7 Richard McEvoy is currently Chief Risk Officer of Tier One Capital, a Non-Executive Director and Trustee of both Age UK Northumberland and The Concern Group, a Coach and Mentor of The Experience Bank and a member of the Northumbria University Advisory Board, with considerable corporate finance sector experience.

- 3.8 Leonard Taylor is a senior mechanical engineering professional and is currently a Sector Specialist for offshore wind and renewables for the Northern Powerhouse/Department for Trade and also Managing Director of Lenergy Consulting, with proven Chief Executive Officer experience in the energy, chemical storage and offshore wind industries.

4.0 Additions and Changes to Outside Bodies

Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group

- 4.1 The Council was recently invited to nominate an elected member representative and an officer representative to the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group which is open to all members of the LGA. The officer representative was appointed at the September 2021 Council meeting. It is now requested that a Member representative be appointed.
- 4.2 The LGA Coastal SIG exists to champion and represent the collective interests of the coastal communities by increasing awareness and debate on environmental, economic and social issues at all levels in relation to the coast. It works in partnership with other organisations with complementary aims and brings pressure on the Government to secure local government's full involvement at all levels of policy formulation concerning the coast.
- 4.3 The LGA Coastal SIG meets 4 times per year. All nominated Member and officer representatives are invited to attend. These meetings are attended by representatives from relevant government departments (e.g. Defra, MHCLG) and provide a direct line to government. The SIG also attracts a varied programme of external speakers, including an Executive Director of the Environment Agency and the Chief Officer of the Association of Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities.
- 4.4 Council is therefore requested to appoint an elected member representative.

Positions as Trustees on the Samuel Dobson and Victoria House Trusts

- 4.5 A vacancy for a Councillor representative exists on both the Samuel Dobson Trust and the Victoria House Trust previously held by former Councillor Turner.

Northumbria Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Programming and Investment Group

- 4.6 Members will recall that at the Annual Council meeting in May 2021, Councillor Peacock, with Councillor Edgeworth as the substitute, were appointed as representatives on the Northumbria Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.
- 4.7 The Council was recently invited to nominate a main member from its strategic group in order that they are able to provide updates to the Northumbria Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Programming and Investment Group and in addition, to appoint a substitute in the event the main member is not able to attend.
- 4.8 Accordingly, the Council is therefore requested to nominate a member and a substitute as representatives to the Northumbria Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Programming and Investment Group.

Newcastle Airport Consultative Committee

- 4.9 Newcastle International Airport's Consultative Committee aims to:-
- Provide a forum for dialogue between the airport, its users and neighbours
 - Convey greater understanding to the community about airport operations
 - Offer the airport management company insights into local, social, economic and environmental impacts of those operations and future proposals.
- 4.10 The aim of the Committee is to:
- Act as a 'critical friend' to the airport, monitoring change and challenging performance where necessary
 - Improve the passenger experience through its role in protecting and enhancing facilities
 - Promote the exchange of information and ideas, help monitor trends and increase effectiveness by drawing on local knowledge.
- 4.11 The Committee is made up of representatives of:
- Local residents' groups and local parish councillors
 - Borough, city and county councillors
 - Members of other organisations who seek to represent passengers and other people who use the airport.
- 4.12 The Committee normally meets on the first Tuesday of March, June, September and December at the airport.
- 4.13 The Council is requested to nominate an elected member representative to serve on the Consultative Committee.

Recommendations

The Council is accordingly invited to:-

- (i) appoint Councillor Usher to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee in place of Councillor Bewick;
- (ii) appoint a Liberal Democrat Group Member to the seat on the Homelessness Appeals Panel held by the former member, Councillor Jenkins;
- (iii) appoint Councillor Usher to the seat on the Appeals Panel held by the former member, Councillor Jenkins;
- (iv) approve the appointment of Richard McEvoy and Leonard Taylor to the Port of Sunderland Port Board, for a three year term;
- (v) appoint Councillor Scott to the Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group;
- (vi) appoint Councillor Price to the Samuel Dobson Trust;
- (vii) appoint Councillor Blackburn to the Victoria House Trust;
- (viii) appoint Councillor Scott as the representative with Councillor Usher as substitute representatives on the Northumbria Regional Flood and Coastal Committee Coastal Committee Programming and Investment Group; and
- (ix) appoint Councillor Stewart as the Council's representative on the Newcastle Airport Consultative Committee.

