

## APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

### APPOINTMENTS CRITERIA

At its meeting held in March 2009, the former Governance and Constitution Committee agreed to adopt the following appointments criteria will form the basis of an objective, rational and open appointment process.

#### i. **Criteria for making appointments**

##### **(a) The Appointment is a Statutory Requirement**

There will be a limited number of bodies to which the Authority is required to appoint but statutory requirement should be included as a criterion. Examples include the Police Authority and Fire Authority.

##### **(b) Appointment Allows the Authority to Influence Policy at National or Regional Level**

This will apply to those organisations which give the Authority a voice at national or regional level and enables it to influence high-level policy decisions. Examples will include the Local Government Association and the North-West Employers Organisation.

##### **(c) Appointment Assists the Authority to Deliver its Strategic Objectives and Priorities**

This is a key part of any appointment system, where it can be demonstrated that the appointment will make a direct or significant contribution to the Authority's strategic objectives, in particular the Corporate Plan.

##### **(d) Appointment is to an Organisation which Receives Major Funding from the Authority or Provides Key Public Services**

Representation will ensure that the organisation uses its funding properly and develops in a way which the Authority considers appropriate.

Those organisations which provide key public services, for example Housing Trusts, are often created by a local authority which reserves the right to place Members on the organisation's Board.

##### **(e) Where an approved organisation is ward-specific, the Member appointed should be an appropriate Ward Member.**

In Wards where there is more than one Member, it will be for those Ward Members themselves to agree on the nomination. In the event of no agreement being reached, the Constitution Committee will make the decision.

## **ii. Criteria for Declining to make Appointment**

In rare cases, it may not be appropriate to appoint to an outside organisation; for example, where there are significant cost or resource implications for the Authority when balanced against the benefits. These will be determined as and when the situation arises.

## **iii. Issues for Consideration in Making Appointments**

In addition to adopting the approved criteria, the following should be taken into account -

### **○ Political Proportionality**

When making appointments to outside organisations, there is no requirement to adopt the rules of proportionality, but there are some organisations where it is appropriate for the leading political group to take the places. These will, for the most part, be those organisations identified as Category 1.

Political proportionality is used as a starting point only by the Outside Organisations Sub-Committee to enable a fair distribution of places.

### **○ Continuity/Members' Interests**

Continuity of representation can be important to outside organisations. Even where the organisation's constitution stipulates a term of office of 12 months only, the representative can build up expertise and experience which can be a loss to that organisation if a new representative is appointed after expiry of the term of office. For this reason, where possible, and provided the representative is willing to continue to serve, consideration should be given to re-appointing the same Member, if appropriate. This could depend on, for example, where elections may change the political balance or it may be appropriate to provide opportunities for newly-elected councillors to serve on organisations which reflect their interests.

Note: Following the elections in May 2011, all appointments are for the life of the Council.

### **○ Potential Conflict**

Members will need to consider, when being appointed, that in taking up a formal position within an incorporated body - as director or trustee – the Member will be under a legal duty to act in the best interests of that outside body, notwithstanding the fact that he/she is there as a representative of the Authority. That duty will override a Member's duties to the Authority or the Council-tax payers it serves. It is also worth noting that where a matter is raised by the outside organisation relating to its relationship with the Authority, it is likely to give rise to a conflict of interest for the Member representative who will usually be required to absent him/herself from the meeting during the discussion. A dual-mandated role may therefore be

problematic and out-weigh any perceived benefits for either the organisation or the Authority. In these circumstances, the Member may take the view that he/she should not take up the appointment. As this would apply to any councillor appointed in these circumstances, a review of representation, for that particular organisation, would need to be undertaken.