



Newhaven Town Council

REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES POLICY

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Purpose of this policy

Newhaven Town Council (NTC) recognises that they may require representatives on a variety of outside bodies within the local area. Representation may be for several reasons, such as:

- The work of the outside body or group directly affects NTC business, services, land or property
- The body or group specifically requests an NTC representative
- It is considered key that NTC is aware of the work the body or group is undertaking due to its impact on Newhaven, its residents or visitors
- The body or group is an opportunity to liaise with other external companies or authorities in the interests of the town, its residents or visitors
- NTC has a financial interest or commitment with the body or group and/or its function.

The scope of this policy

It applies to all Councillors but does not apply to Staff.

Policy

This policy is intended to help Councillors understand their duties when appointed to outside bodies.

Definition

The outside bodies generally fall into one of the following categories:

- A local voluntary community group or organisation
- A local charity
- A larger association that has an impact on the business of NTC or the Town
- A liaison meeting with other companies or local authorities
- A management committee/society managing either NTC owned land or property, or that NTC is in some way financially connected with
- A body that can offer town improvement.

Responsibilities

An NTC representative represents NTC as a whole, rather than acting in a personal capacity. This means that the representative must always act in accordance with NTC policies and procedures, the Member's Code of Conduct and bear in mind the limitations of NTC as a corporate body.

The representative allows its outside body to gain access to the expertise and knowledge of the NTC and ensures the Town Council is kept up to date with the actions and future plans of the body. The aim is that all interested parties are working together and communicating effectively for the benefit of the town, its residents and visitors.

The NTC representative is expected to attend meetings of the outside body, contribute to discussions and decision-making, read policy papers and support the aims and objectives of the group. Repeated failure by the elected representative to attend meetings without good reason should be reported by the group to the Town Clerk.

The representative should attend as many meetings of an outside body as they are reasonably able and send apologies if they are not able to attend. They may ask another Town Councillor to substitute for them in their absence if the outside body is willing.

Limitations

It is vital that the representative and the body itself understand the limitations of the NTC representative.

An NTC representative cannot commit the Town Council's resources or support, whether financial or 'in kind' to an outside body. If anything of this nature is requested it should be bought back to the Town Council, through the Town Clerk, for consideration.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Members' Code of Conduct, which has been adopted by Council. When Councillors are representing NTC on another body, they must follow the code unless it conflicts with a legal duty owed to the other body.

Reporting

For both the outside body and NTC to benefit from the representation it is important that regular updates are reported back to Town Council by the representative. The methods considered most effective for reporting back are:

- Minutes of meetings – any minutes of meetings received by a representative should be sent to the Town Clerk for forwarding on to all Town Councillors (unless they are considered confidential)
- Updates to Full Town Council and/or Committee meetings – if the representative feels there is a matter that needs to be considered by Full Town Council or a committee then a report should be prepared and sent to the Town Clerk to circulate with the agenda for the appropriate meeting
- Email updates – representatives should forward to the Town Clerk any email updates from the outside body, for forwarding to all Town Councillors.

Who appoints representatives to outside bodies

Under section 10a xxiv of the Standing Orders a councillor can introduce a motion without written notice to the Proper Officer "to appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies."

If there is more than one nomination for the same appointment, the Council will vote to determine who should be appointed.

In the majority of cases, representatives are appointed to serve for a period of one year but can be re-appointed as part of the annual review.

Change of representation

An outside body is free to request an alternate NTC representative on the understanding that the replacement will be chosen by the Town Council, not by the outside body. Repeated non-attendance at meetings without good reason offers valid grounds for an outside body to request an alternate NTC representative.

An outside body is free to inform NTC at any time that Town Council representation is no longer required, if its constitution allows it to do so.

A representative wishing to stand down from their role should first inform the outside body itself and then the Town Clerk. Where possible, the Town Clerk will invite another Town Councillor to substitute on the outside body until a representative can be formally appointed by the NTC.

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