



Peacehaven Town Council

Outside Body Representation Policy

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1. Introduction & Policy Statement

1.1. Peacehaven Town Council has Council representatives on a variety of outside bodies within the local area. Representation could be for a number of reasons such as: -

- a. The work of the outside body or group directly affecting Council business, services, land, or property.
- b. The body or group specifically requesting a Council representative.
- c. It being considered key that the Council is aware of the work the body or group is undertaking due to its impact on the town, its residents, or visitors.
- d. The body or group being an opportunity to liaise with other external companies or authorities in the interests of the town, its residents, or visitors.
- e. The Council having a financial interest or commitment with the body or group and/or its function.

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

- a. A local voluntary community group or organisation
- b. A local charity
- c. A larger association that has an impact on the business of the Council or town.
- d. A liaison meeting with other companies or local authorities
- e. A management committee/society
- f. A body that can offer support or improvements to the town

2. The role of the Council representative

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

2.2 The representative allows its outside body to gain access to the expertise and knowledge of the Council, unless authorised, the use of an officer's time is subject to agreement with individual officers and Council approval after a cost benefit analysis has been considered (please see 5.2). This ensures that the 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

2.3. The representative should attend as many meetings of an outside body as they are reasonably able to and request the office send apologies if unable to attend. They may ask another Councillor to substitute for them in their absence if the outside body is willing.

2.4. Council representatives will be appointed by Full Council.

2.5. There is an expectation that Council Officers will attend management or liaison meetings where Council operational matters are being discussed, although this will be at the officer's discretion after considering their individual work priority and availability. Council Officers may also be invited to other meetings, where considered beneficial by the outside body and Council representative.

3. Reporting

3.1. In order for both the outside body and Council to benefit from the representation, it is important that regular updates are reported back to Council by the representative. The methods considered most effective for reporting back are: -

a. Minutes of meetings – any minutes of meetings received by a representative should be forwarded to Officers who, unless confidential, will forward to councillors..

b. Updates to Council and/or Committee meetings – In consideration that minutes may not always be immediately available, representatives will prepare a brief report. A standing item for feedback will always be on Full Council agenda for consideration at its meetings.

c. Email Updates – representatives should forward Officers any e-mail updates from the outside body, for forwarding to Councillors.

d. Annual Reports – representatives may submit an ‘End-of-year’ report as part of the agenda for the Council’s Annual Meeting in May. As much information as possible should be shared.

4 Change of representation

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

4.2 An outside body is free to inform the Council at any time that Council representation is no longer required.

4.3 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 in Consultation with the Chair of Council will invite another Councillor to act as a temporary representative on the outside body until a representative can be formally appointed by Full Council.

5 Limitations

5.1 A Council representative cannot commit the Council resources or support, whether financial or ‘in kind’ to an outside body. If anything of this nature is requested it should be brought back to the Council, through the Town Clerk, for consideration.

5.2 Council representatives need to be mindful not to become involved in the day-to-day operational business of the Council, which is delegated to Officers to undertake on behalf of the Council. Any concerns resulting from a meeting, e-mail or discussion should be taken to the Town Clerk as appropriate.

5.3 Council representatives with organisations and/or charities which may seek a contractual arrangement, grant funding and/or similar arrangement with or from the Council, should be careful to ensure their words and/or actions cannot lead either the outside body or a reasonable member of the public to believe their position will affect Council decision. Depending on the nature of the resolution, Council representatives may, in some instances, feel it prudent to abstain from discussion and/or the decision.

5.4 Councillors with a personal interest or involvement with an outside body should not stand as a Council representative to that body.

5.5 The representative and the body itself must understand the limitations of the Council representative.

5.6 If an additional outside body representative is requested by a third party or member, prior to a Full Council to appoint them, the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman may appoint them as a temporary representative until the next meeting to discuss and make decision of formal appointment.

Important Note: If you consider membership of an outside body is posing a potential conflict of interest, please refer to the Dispensations Policy for guidance

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