

The Role of Littlehampton Town Council Representatives on Outside Bodies

1. A Town Council representative on an outside body is exactly that: he/she represents the Council as a body rather than acting in a personal capacity. This means that a Town Council representative must always act in accordance with Council policies and bear in mind the limitations of the Council as a corporate body, as well as the opportunities which Council involvement can offer to any outside group. Town Council representatives on outside bodies allow those bodies to tap into the expertise and knowledge of the Council and councillors' links with other public sector organisations, such as the County and District councils and the Police.
2. A Town Council representative should not commit Council resources or support, whether financial or 'in kind', to an outside body but should bring all such requests back to Council in writing for consideration.
3. Administrative support by Council staff is not available to outside bodies nor, in most cases*, to Town Council representatives on outside bodies. Town Council representatives are responsible for carrying out the administration to support their own role (* the Town Clerk's approval must be sought and this will only be given in extreme cases).
4. Town Council representatives should update Council regularly about the outside bodies they are involved in. Ideally this should be done by verbal updates at Council meetings. Minutes of outside bodies' meetings should be available to all Councillors and the Town Clerk.
5. Town Council representatives should attend as many meetings of an outside body as they are reasonably able and send apologies if they are not able to attend a meeting. They may ask another councillor to attend in their stead if the outside body is willing and permitted by its constitution to accept this.
6. The Council expects its representatives to be kept informed of all meetings of outside bodies in a timely fashion and also expects that all paperwork will be shared with them.
7. Any outside body is free to reject a specific Council representative with due reason on the understanding that his/her replacement will be nominated by Council, not by the outside body. Repeated non-attendance at meetings without good reason offers valid grounds to reject a specific Council representative.
8. All outside groups are free to inform the Council at any time that Council representatives are no longer required, if their constitution so allows, although it should be noted that some funding is linked to having a representative of the Town Council sitting at meetings of that group.
9. Town Council representatives on outside bodies should not become Trustees or voting members of management committees etc. They should participate only representing the Town Council by reporting back on pertinent issues to the Council / Town Clerk. Put simply, they should remain solely as observers at the meeting. They are able to respond to questions and participate but must not vote.