

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/25/7
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY (Budget Meeting)
DATE OF MEETING	17 FEBRUARY 2025
SUBJECT OF REPORT	AUTHORITY MEMBERSHIP & APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES
LEAD OFFICER	Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer)
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p><i>(a). That Councillor Noble be appointed to the Audit and Governance Committee to replace Councillor Sproston until the Authority's Annual Meeting on 16 June 2025;</i></p> <p><i>(b). that Councillor Biederman be appointed to the Audit & Governance Committee to fill the Liberal Democrat vacancy left by Councillor Roome;</i></p> <p><i>(c). that the Authority considers the appointment of Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee; and</i></p> <p><i>(d). that the vacancy for an Independent on both the Audit & Governance and Shareholder Committees be filled by the Devon County Council appointee unless this position should change whereupon this vacancy should be left open until the Authority's Annual Meeting on 16 June 2025 pending the review of the Authority's political balance.</i></p>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Clerk has been advised of a number of changes impacting the Authority membership and appointments to committees. These changes together with the implications and proposed actions are set out within this report.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Nil.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Not applicable
APPENDICES	Nil.
BACKGROUND PAPERS	None.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Clerk has been advised of a number of changes impacting the Authority membership and appointments to committees. These changes together with the implications and proposed actions are set out within this report.

2. RESIGNATION OF AUTHORITY MEMBERS

- 2.1. On 15 January 2025, the Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer) was advised by Plymouth City Council that Councillor Kevin Sproston had resigned and was being replaced on the Authority by Councillor William Noble.
- 2.2. Further to this, the Clerk has been advised of the resignation of Councillor Ian Roome effective from 5 February 2025. Councillor Biederman (previously an Independent Group Member) has become a Liberal Democrat Member and Devon County Council has notified the Clerk that he is filling the vacancy left on the Authority by Councillor Roome.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1. Councillor Sproston's departure has left a vacant position on the Authority's Audit and Governance Committee. Given the late stage in the municipal year, it is recommended that the Authority appoints Councillor Noble to this vacancy until the Authority's Annual General Meeting on 16 June 2025. Councillor Noble is in agreement with this proposed appointment.
- 3.2. Councillor Biederman is Vice Chair of the Authority and this change in political group does not impact this position. Standing Orders state:

Standing Order 3 – Chair and Vice Chair:

- (2). Any person elected as Vice-Chair must:
- (a) if the Chair is a Member appointed by a constituent authority, be from a different constituent body to the person elected as Chair;

- 3.3. Councillor Roome was also Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee. Standing Order 34(1) states that:
- (1) Chairs and Vice-Chairs of standing Committees will be appointed by the Authority at its Annual Meeting and will remain in office until their replacements are appointed or they cease to be a Member of the Authority, in which case a substantive replacement will be appointed at the next meeting of the Authority.
- 3.4. There is a further meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee scheduled for 29 April 2025 at 14:00 hours. The Authority is therefore asked to consider the appointment of Chair of this Committee. The Vice Chair of Audit & Governance Committee is Councillor Kerley who can take the Chair of this meeting should it be proposed to leave this appointment until the Authority's Annual Meeting on 16 June 2025.

- 3.5. The appointment of Councillor Biederman to replace Councillor Roome still leaves a Devon vacancy on the Authority (currently Independent) and further information is awaited from Devon County Council on the replacement. If this information is received prior to the budget meeting on 17 February 2025, the Clerk will provide an update at the meeting.
- 3.6. If the Devon vacancy is not filled by an Independent Group Member, this may impact on the political balance of the Authority and thus, a review of the allocation of seats on committees would be required.

4. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

- 4.1. As stated in 3.1. above, it is recommended that Councillor Noble be appointed to the Audit & Governance Committee to replace Councillor Sproston.
- 4.2. It is also recommended that Councillor Biederman be appointed to replace Councillor Roome as a Liberal Democrat member of the Audit & Governance Committee. This will leave an Independent Group vacancy currently on Audit & Governance Committee pending the appointment of a new Authority Member by Devon County Council.
- 4.3. Should the Devon County Council vacancy be filled by an Independent Group Member, the Clerk is seeking approval to fill the vacancies left by Councillor Biederman on both the Audit & Governance Committee and the Shareholder Committee accordingly (which meets on 25 April 2025). Should Devon County Council not appoint an Independent member to the vacancy left by Councillor Biederman, it is recommended that these vacancies on committees be left until the Authority's Annual Meeting on 16 June 2025 pending a review of the Authority's political balance.
- 4.4. The existing appointments to committees as agreed by the Authority at its Annual Meeting in June 2024 are set out at Appendix A of this report for reference.

SAMANTHA SHARMAN
Clerk to the Authority (& Monitoring Officer)

APPENDIX A TO REPORT DSFRA/25/7

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES 2024-25 MUNICIPAL YEAR

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (9 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Clayton	Kendall	Sproston	Biederman
Fellows	Kerley		
Prowse	Roome (Chair)		
Sellis			

COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE (7 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Chesterton	Best	Hendy (Chair)	
Fellows	Brazil		
Radford	Kerley		

PEOPLE COMMITTEE (7 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Clayton (Chair)	Carter	Atkinson	
Peart	Coles		
Trail BEM	Kendall		

RESOURCES COMMITTEE (7 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Peart (Chair)	Best	Gilmour	
Power	Carter		
Lugger	Sully		

SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Cook-Woodman (Chair)	Coles	Hendy	Biederman
Peart	Sully		
Randall Johnson			

APPOINTMENTS & DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE (4 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Cook-Woodman	Coles (Chair)	Hendy	
Randall Johnson			

APPEALS COMMITTEE (4 Members)

Con	LD	Lab	Ind.
Clayton	Roome	Gilmour	
Power			