

Appointments to Outside Bodies for the 2026/27 Municipal Year

Committee considering report:	Council
Date of Committee:	14 May 2026
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Vicky Poole (Portfolio Holder: Strategy and Governance and Commercialisation)
Date Head of Service agreed report:	14 April 2026
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	30 April 2026
Report Author:	Sarah Clarke (Executive Director – Resources)

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the appointment of seats on Outside Bodies for the next Municipal Year. Where necessary, such appointments must comply with the duty under section 15 of the Local Government Housing Act 1989, to ensure that these reflect the latest political make-up of the Council.
- 1.2 The election of Councillors to West Berkshire Council usually takes place every four years, but appointment of Members to a number of bodies needs to be considered on an annual basis.
- 1.3 These are:
 - Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
 - Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel
 - Local Government Association General Assembly

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is requested to approve the appointments for the Municipal Year 2026/27, of Member representatives to the following outside bodies:
 - Royal Berkshire Fire Authority:
 - Councillor Jeff Brooks
 - Councillor Billy Drummond
 - Councillor Owen Jeffery
 - Councillor Dennis Benneyworth

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- Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel:
 - Councillor Stephanie Steevenson
 - Councillor Jeremy Cottam (Alternative Member)
- Local Government Association General Assembly:
 - Councillor Jeff Brooks
 - Councillor Heather Codling
 - Councillor Martin Colston
 - Councillor Ross Mackinnon

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary			
Financial:	West Berkshire Council Members are not paid to attend Outside Body meetings, but any costs associated with meeting attendance will be met from within existing Members Allowances budget, where the Outside Body does not pay these costs.			
Human Resource:	None			
Legal:	The Council is required to appoint members to certain bodies, such as the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel.			
Risk Management:	None			
Property:	None			
Policy:	Where appropriate, appointments will be made in accordance with Part 13, Appendix D (Protocol for Council Representation on Outside Bodies) of the Council's Constitution.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				

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A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
Environmental Impact:		X		
Health Impact:		X		
ICT Impact:		X		
Digital Services Impact:		X		
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		
Core Business:		X		
Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	None			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The Council is required to appoint representatives to a range of Outside Bodies. Other appointments (separate to this report) will be made via an Individual Executive Member Decision as necessary.
- 4.2 Nominations to the three Outside Bodies; Royal Berkshire Fire Authority, Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel, and the Local Government Association General Assembly are required annually. Appointments, where appropriate, will be made in

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accordance with Appendix D to Part 13 of the Constitution (Protocol for Council Representatives on Outside Bodies).

5 Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

- 5.1 Members are responsible for setting the Fire and Rescue Service operating budget and determining how the service is run. Meetings of the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority take place in the evenings, on a quarterly basis, and previously these have taken place at the Authority's Headquarters in Calcot, Reading. It should be noted that a Member appointed to the Fire Authority is expected to attend all Fire Authority meetings and to serve on at least one committee or working party.
- 5.2 Appointments to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority are made on a proportionality basis based on the electoral roll. The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service have informed the Council that they require four Member appointments from West Berkshire Council. Under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the Council is required to allocate seats on the Fire Authority reflecting the political balance of the whole Council.
- 5.1 The Council's representatives in 2025/26 were Councillors Dennis Benneyworth, Jeff Brooks, Billy Drummond, and Owen Jeffery.
- 5.2 It is proposed that these Members be reappointed for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

6 Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel

- 6.1 The Panel comprises 18 elected members (one from each Authority) and two co-optees. Appointments of elected Members to the Panel are made in accordance with each Authority's own procedures, with a view to ensuring that the 'balanced appointment objective' is met, so far as is reasonable practicable.
- 6.2 The balanced appointment objective requires that the Panel should (when taken together):
 - Represent all parts of the police area;
 - Represent the political make-up of the authorities;
 - Have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the Panel to discharge its functions effectively.
- 6.3 A Member shall be appointed to the Panel at the Annual Meeting of Council, subject to the following provisos:

That they shall cease to be a Member of the Panel if they cease to be a member of:

 - The Authority;
 - The political group in the Authority when the appointment to hold office was made.

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- 6.4 The Council's representative in 2025/26 was Councillor Stephanie Steevenson, with Councillor Jeremy Cottam appointed as alternate Member.
- 6.5 It is proposed that these Members be reappointed for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

7 Local Government Association General Assembly

- 7.1 The Local Government Association is a politically-led, cross-party organisation that works on behalf of councils to ensure that local government has a voice with national government. It aims to influence and set the political agenda on issues relevant to councils in order to deliver local solutions.
- 7.2 The General Assembly acts as the 'parliament' of local government, with authorities in LGA membership entitled to have a minimum of one representative. It meets each summer at the LGA's Annual Conference. Membership is reviewed annually.
- 7.3 Four places are available to West Berkshire Council. There is no requirement that the Council allocate seats to the General Assembly in a politically balanced manner. However, the Local Government Association encourages authorities entitled to three or four representatives on the General Assembly to allocate one of those positions to the Opposition Group Leader.
- 7.4 The Council's representatives in 2025/26 were Councillors Jeff Brooks, Denise Gaines, Martin Colston, and Ross Mackinnon.
- 7.5 It is proposed that Councillor Heather Codling replace Councillor Denise Gaines, as the current Deputy Leader, and that the other Members be reappointed for the 2026/27 Municipal Year.

8 Other options considered

- 8.1 Not to appoint representatives which is not recommended for the reasons detailed in the report.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 That the Council should agree and note that the appointments to the organisations set out in this report be made in accordance with the recommendation.

10 Appendices

- 10.1 None.

Background Papers:

None

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Subject to Call-In: No

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position

Considered or reviewed by Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

Wards affected: All Wards

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