

DUMFRIES TOWN BOARD INTERIM TERMS OF REFERENCE

Date: 26 March 2024

Introduction:

In September 2023 the UK Government launched its 'Long-Term Plan for Towns', as part of the Levelling-Up programme. This programme intends to invest £1.1 billion in 55 towns over ten years. Dumfries has been selected among seven in Scotland and will receive £20 million in endowment-style funding from 2024/25. Funding will be released to be invested over a 10-year period and will be split 25% revenue, 75% capital.

In establishing how this funding is to be invested the UK Government is taking a distinct approach by requiring the establishment of Town Boards as new decision-making bodies. These are to bring together residents, business and community leaders to devise and agree a shared vision for the future and to develop entrepreneurial, creative and forward-looking initiatives for each town. By devolving investment decisions to the town level, the Government also seeks the development of the capacity of local places to deliver positive change.

These Terms of Reference are informed by guidance produced by the Department of Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities in December 2023 - [Long-Term Plan for Towns: guidance for local authorities and Town Boards](#).

Remit:

The Dumfries Town Board should drive priorities for investment and steer the long-term vision for their town, in conjunction with the local community.

It will do this through developing the Long-Term Plan (the Plan) for Dumfries town within the timescales agreed with the UK Government, comprising:

- A 10-year vision
- A 3-year investment plan

Use the funding available to it to ensure that the Plan should reflect local priorities and be co-designed with communities, businesses and residents, drawing on available evidence and data.

Thereafter to review and monitor the milestones and outcomes of the Plan and to roll-forward the investment plans.

Membership:

Membership of the Board will be comprised as follows.

Members prescribed by the UK Government:

- A chairperson, independent of the local authority and not holding an elected position in any tier of government.
- The relevant local MPs.

- Two councillors as determined by Dumfries and Galloway Council (or their named substitute)
- A senior representative from the police.

Other membership should be tailored at the chair's discretion in consultation with the local authority to include:

- Relevant local MSPs.
- Community partners.
- Local businesses and social enterprises.
- Cultural, arts, heritage and sporting organisations.
- Public agencies and anchor institutions.

The balance of elected representatives on the Board should not exceed one third of membership.

Quorum

The quorum for meetings of the Town Board shall be one quarter or 25% of the membership with a minimum of 3.

If a quorum of members of the Town Board is not present within 15 minutes of the published start time the meeting will be adjourned to a date to be agreed with the Chair.

During a meeting should the number of members of the Town Board fall below the number required for a quorum the meeting shall be adjourned to a date to be agreed with the Chair.

Terms of Appointment:

- Members of the Board will be appointed for an initial period of 3 years.
- Elected representatives will serve in their elected capacity with their ongoing membership determined by that elected position.
- The selection of any Board member sitting to represent a stakeholder organisation will be a matter for each organisation, who should however act to support continuity as far as is possible.
- Membership is on a voluntary, non-paid basis but travel and other reasonable expenses will be covered in line with the published [Dumfries and Galloway Council Member Scheme of Remuneration](#) advice on which may be sought from the Clerk.
- A Register of Interest must be completed following appointment in the format prescribed in the [Model Code of Conduct for Members of Devolved Bodies](#).
- Where a Member of the Town Board is already an Elected member and have completed the requisite register for their 'parent' body that will be deemed sufficient providing it has been updated in the preceding 12 months.
- Resignation from your position must be made in writing to the Town Board Chair.

Chair and Vice Chair:

The independent Chair of Long-Term Plan for Town Boards is invited by Dumfries and Galloway Council. The local MP must be engaged as part of the process.

The Chair may choose to appoint a Depute.

Operating Principles:

The Town Board will publish membership and governance arrangements (including minutes of meetings and decision logs) on the Dumfries and Galloway Council website.

The Town Board will meet at least quarterly and publish:

- a documented decision-making process outlining the voting rights of the board
- profiles of board members
- all board papers in advance of the meeting within 5 working days
- draft minutes of meetings following the meeting within 10 working days
- final minutes, once approved by the board within 10 working days
- any conflicts of interest reported, within the published minutes

Town Boards should follow Dumfries and Galloway Council governance and finance arrangements when considering 'private' or exempt reports, with the default position being that all papers are open to the public. The definition of what constitutes a 'private' or exempt paper shall be as defined by Section 50A (4) Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

There should be clear processes for managing conflicts of interests (both commercial, actual, and potential) in decision making, which apply to all involved with the work of the Town Board.

Dumfries and Galloway Council will provide guidance on:

- the financial and non-financial interests individuals must declare
- the process Town Board members must follow for declaring interests at meetings of the Town Board
- the process for requesting an exemption

Town Board members will then complete a Register of Interests, which Dumfries and Galloway Council will then hold.

Town Board members are responsible for declaring their interests before the Town Board considers any decisions. Dumfries and Galloway Council must record:

- actions taken in response to any declared interest
- any gifts or hospitality given to the Town Board or individual members

Ways of Working:

Each individual member must take responsibility for building an inclusive and collaborative culture of partnership among the Board and with wider community and town interests.

Members must act with respect, equity and recognise and value differences in experience and attitude at all times, helping to establish trust across the Board and recognising that embracing diversity will lead to the outputs of the Board being the best they can be.

All members of the Board must be leaders, motivating others to engage, enthusing and inspiring, convincing them that the work of the Board, including development and implementation of the Long-Term Plan for Dumfries, is worth investing their time and efforts in.

All have a duty to ensure the Board, in leading and driving change, remains action orientated and focussed on outcomes, recognising the importance of measuring and evaluating the progress of impacts and being accountable.

Board members are expected to act in accordance with the [Model Code of Conduct for Members of Boards of Devolved Public Bodies](#) (2021), issued by the Standards Commission for Scotland by virtue of Part 1 of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000.

Where these Terms of Reference are silent advice should be sought from the Clerk who will have a proportionate and general regard to the published [Dumfries and Galloway Council Standing Orders](#)

Secretariat:

The Local Authority, or an alternative organisation such as a community group if that is agreed between the Chair and Local Authority, should act as secretariat to the Town Board.

Voting:

Wherever possible a consensus of the meeting shall be sought without the need for a formal vote to be taken.

All members of the Town Board shall have a vote unless they have declared an interest in the foregoing item which would preclude them from voting.

Where a consensus is not possible, voting shall be by a show of hands unless a recorded vote is requested by one quarter of those present, whereupon a vote shall be taken by roll call.

In the event of an equality of votes the Chair may give a casting vote to break the deadlock.

Duties of the Chair:

Determine that the meeting is properly constituted and that a quorum is present

Manage the business of the meeting and preserve order

Confine discussion to the scope of the meeting and the business to be considered

Determine with advice from the Clerk whether any proposed motions and amendments are in order

Ascertain the sense of the meeting by:

Putting relevant questions to the meeting and where appropriate taking a vote and if so minded in the event of an equality of votes, giving a casting vote

Declaring the result of any vote

Deciding upon the admission of any business deemed urgent and not published on the agenda

Closing the meeting

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