

Report to:	Governance Committee
Date:	24 June 2025
By:	Deputy Chief Executive
Title of report:	Conservators of Ashdown Forest – Appointment of Council representatives
Purpose of report:	To appoint representatives to the Board of Conservators of Ashdown Forest

RECOMMENDATION:

The Governance Committee is recommended to consider whether to confirm the appointment of 3 Council representatives on the Board of Conservators of Ashdown Forest for the term set out in this report.

1. Supporting Information

1.1 The County Council is invited to appoint Members (and in some cases non-County Councillors are eligible) to serve on a wide range of outside bodies whose role has a relationship to a function of the County Council. The appointments are a vital part of the County Council's working in partnership with voluntary bodies, statutory agencies and the public and private sectors.

1.2 The County Council appoints eight of the 15 Conservators of Ashdown Forest. Of the remaining seven, two are appointed by Wealden District Council and five are elected by the commoners. In addition, the Chairman of the County Council serves on the Board of Conservators to represent the County Council as Lord of the Manor. The Council representatives do not have to be Councillors. It is the duty of the Conservators to regulate and manage the Forest as an amenity subject to the existing rights of common, to protect the Forest from encroachments and to conserve it as a quiet and natural area of outstanding beauty. The political balance provisions apply to the County Council's appointments to the Conservators of Ashdown Forest.

1.3 The allocation of places to groups agreed by the Governance Committee on 22 April 2025 was: 4 Conservative; 2 Liberal Democrats; 1 Labour and 1 Green. The Conservative Group's nominations, which were agreed in April 2025, were Councillor Howell; Mr T Reid, and Mr R Stogdon. A vacancy for the fourth appointment remained.

1.4 Since these nominations were agreed, Mr T Reid and Mr R Stogdon have advised that they wish to resign from the Board of Conservators. It is therefore necessary to reappoint to the 3 vacancies. The Conservative Group wish to nominate the following 3 representatives:

- Brett Akker;
- Matthew Street; and
- Peter Young.

1.5 As these three proposed appointees are neither existing Conservators nor County Councillors the Governance Committee is asked to consider their CV/supporting statement. The CVs and supporting statements for these nominations

do not contain any specified personal or pecuniary interests. If the nominated representatives are successfully appointed, they will be required to sign the Conservators of Ashdown Forest Code of Conduct and Form of Acceptance. The CVs and supporting information contain exempt information and are set out in a later item on the agenda.

1.6 Appointments to the Conservators of Ashdown Forest shall be for a term of four years, or until resignation or removal prior to the completion of the term.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the further information provided in item 11 and decide whether to confirm the appointments of the 3 persons referred to in paragraph 1.4 as Conservators of Ashdown Forest, for a four year period.

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