



CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

2 JULY 2026 (reconvened from 15 July 2026)

Report of: Monitoring Officer/Director of Legal, Governance and Human Resources

Subject: Member Champion Review

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To review the list of Member Champions.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 2.1 Council on the 21st May 2026 referred to the Constitution Committee, consideration of the inclusion of the position of Refugee Champion in the Council's Constitution.
- 2.2 Following consideration of the referral, the Constitution Committee agreed that rather than looking solely at the position of Refugee Champion, a review of the full list of Hartlepool Borough Council's Member Champions should be undertaken.
- 2.3 The list of Member Champions was previously reviewed by the Constitution Committee on the 6 July 2021, 22 November 2021 and the 1 July 2022.

6 July 2021 (minute No. 5) – The Committee agreed that:

- The removal of the Risk Champion role (the role to be undertaken by Committees rather than an individual elected member)
- A consultation with residents on their 'top 10 priorities' through the Your Say, Our Future approach to inform a review of all the remaining Member Champion roles.
- That the remaining Member Champion appointments be held vacant until the conclusion of the review.

RECONVENED MEETING

Constitution Committee – 2 July 2026 (reconvened on 15 July 2026)

5

The outcome of the consultation was reported to this Committee on 22 November 2021 when it was agreed that as the remit of the majority of Member Champions reflected specific policy area remits, the Champion roles should be allocated to the Chair or Vice Chair of the appropriate Committee, unless it is considered more appropriate for another member of that Committee to be appointed to the role.

22 November 2021 (minute No. 11) – The Committee recommended to Council that the remit of the majority of Member Champions reflected specific policy area remits, the Champion roles be allocated to the Chair or Vice Chair of the appropriate Committee, unless it is considered more appropriate for another member of that Committee to be appointed to the role.

1 July 2022 (Minute No. 4) – The Committee recommended to Council that:

- **That Member Champions to be the Chair or Vice Chair of the relevant Committee, unless there was an interest from another elected member to fulfil the role.**
- **Agree that the following Member Champions be deleted from the list included in the Constitution:-**
 - **Animal Rights Champion**
 - **Anti-Social Behaviour Champion**
- **Member Champions give a verbal or written update to Full Council or relevant Committee.**

Council on the 14 July 2022 approved the above.

2.4 The Council currently appoints seven Member Champions, as detailed below.

Champions	Description
Armed Forces Champion	A prescribed position – required as part of the Armed Forces Covenant with an annual report to Full Council.
Veterans Champion	Established to work alongside the Armed Forces Champion as included in the Armed Forces Community Covenant.
Heritage Champion (Member of Planning Committee)	Report agreed by Planning Committee on 23 October 2013 detailed that English Heritage established a network of Heritage Champions in 2004 (still active) to help ensure that the historic environment plays a central role in the development of all the Authority's policies, plans, targets and strategies. There is no current national or statutory requirement for local authorities in England to appoint a Heritage Champion and the continuation of such a role is a matter for local

RECONVENED MEETING

Constitution Committee – 2 July 2026 (reconvened on 15 July 2026)

5

	determination. English Heritage, however, encourages councils to appoint a Heritage Champion.
Mental Health Champion	This role dates back to the National Service Frameworks for Mental Health was launched and champions were a requirement. This dates back 25 years. There is no current statutory or national policy requirement for local authorities to maintain such a role, and any appointment is now a matter for local discretion. If this role is to continue, it would be to raise the profile of issues relating to mental health and to represent the views of the population group within the Council.
Older Persons Champion (Chair of Adult and Community Based Services Committee)	This role dates back to the National Service Frameworks for older persons was launched and champions were a requirement. This dates back 25 years. There is no current national or statutory requirement for local authorities in England to appoint an Older People's Champion, and the continuation of such a role is a matter for local determination. If this role is to continue, it would be to raise the profile of issues relating to older persons and to represent the views of the population group within the Council.
Refugee Champion	Added with approval of former Chief Executive as it related to a regional partnership*. There is no current national or statutory requirement for local authorities in England to appoint a Refugee Champion. If this role is to continue, it would be to raise the profile of issues relating to refugees, and the continuation of such a role is a matter for local determination. *North East Migration Partnership (NEMP) - recognised as the Strategic Migration Partnership for the Northeast region it coordinates work across the North East's councils on asylum, refugee resettlement and integration.
Children in our Care Champion	There is no legal requirement to appoint a specific Children in Care Champion. The appointment of such a champion is a matter of local discretion. The role is to be the lead corporate parent for children in our care (acting for these children as they would for their own) and the advocate on behalf of children in our care, maximising opportunities for them to excel and achieve their ambition. This entails engaging with and listening to their views, ensuring their voice is heard and influences the way the Authority supports and promotes opportunities for children in care.

RECONVENED MEETING

Constitution Committee – 2 July 2026 (reconvened on 15 July 2026)

5

- 2.5 The role and extent of activities of Champions is at the determination of each Champion, with the exception of the role of Armed Forces Champion which is outlined as part of the Armed Forces Covenant and Armed Forces Community Charter.
- 2.6 Members are asked to review the list of Member Champions and the role / requirements for Members in the conduct of the role.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.7 It is recommended that Members review the list of Member Champions and the role / requirements for Members in the conduct of the role.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To respond to the Council referral (21 May 2026).

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 5.1 None

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

Update as applicable

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