

# Notice of Lower Central Gardens Trust Board



Date: Monday, 23 March 2026 at 10.00 am

Venue: HMS Phoebe, BCP Civic Centre, Bournemouth BH2 6DY

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## Membership:

### Chairman:

Cllr M Gillett

### Vice Chairman:

Cllr J Martin

Cllr B Nanovo

Cllr L Williams

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All Members of the Lower Central Gardens Trust Board are summoned to attend this meeting to consider the items of business set out on the agenda below.

The press and public are welcome to view the live stream of this meeting at the following link:

<https://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=6671>

If you would like any further information on the items to be considered at the meeting please contact: Sinead O'Callaghan or email [sinead.ocallaghan@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:sinead.ocallaghan@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Press enquiries should be directed to the Press Office: Tel: 01202 454668 or email [press.office@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

This notice and all the papers mentioned within it are available at [democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk](http://democracy.bcpCouncil.gov.uk)

AIDAN DUNN  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

13 March 2026

**DEBATE  
NOT HATE**



Available online and  
on the Mod.Gov app

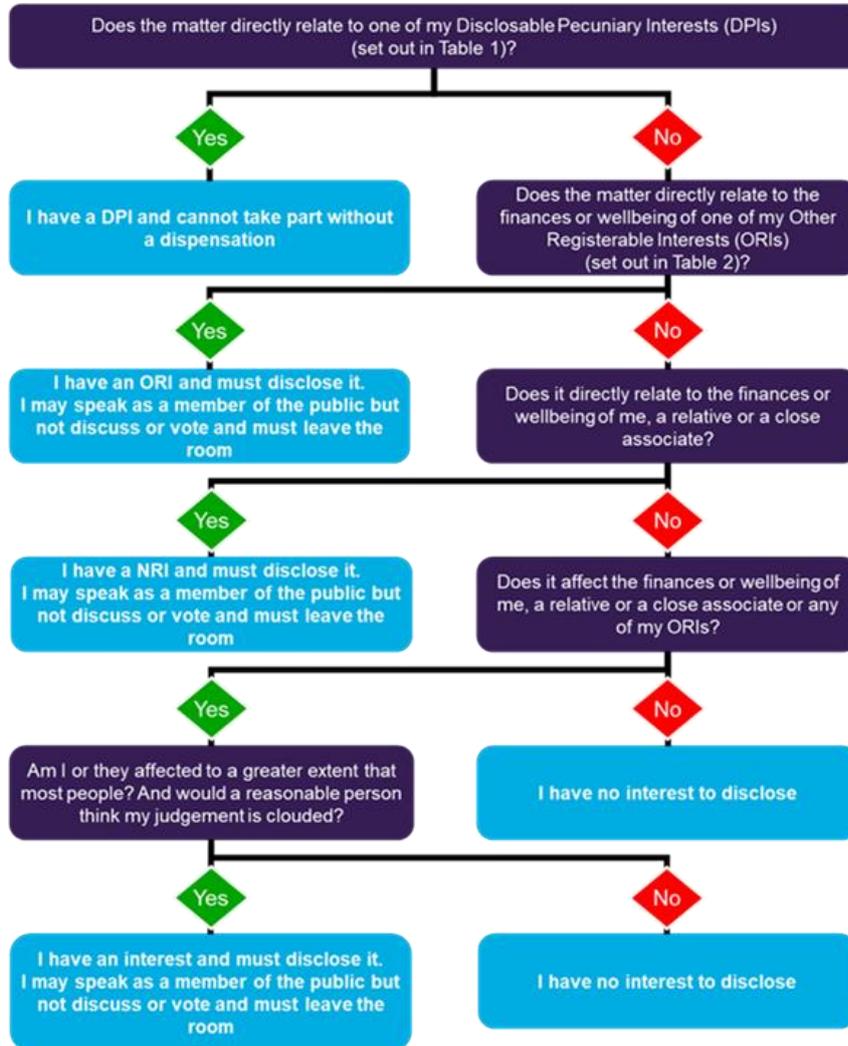


Maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct

**Declaring interests at meetings**

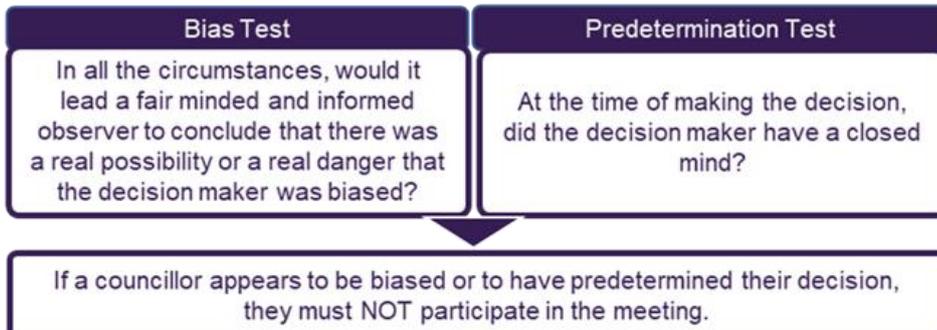
Familiarise yourself with the Councillor Code of Conduct which can be found in Part 6 of the Council's Constitution.

Before the meeting, read the agenda and reports to see if the matters to be discussed at the meeting concern your interests



**What are the principles of bias and pre-determination and how do they affect my participation in the meeting?**

Bias and predetermination are common law concepts. If they affect you, your participation in the meeting may call into question the decision arrived at on the item.



For more information or advice please contact the Monitoring Officer

**Selflessness**

Councillors should act solely in terms of the public interest

**Integrity**

Councillors must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships

**Objectivity**

Councillors must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias

**Accountability**

Councillors are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

**Openness**

Councillors should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing

**Honesty & Integrity**

Councillors should act with honesty and integrity and should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned

**Leadership**

Councillors should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs

# AGENDA

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

**1. Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. Declarations of Interests**

Councillors are requested to declare any interests on items included in this agenda. Please refer to the workflow on the preceding page for guidance. Declarations received will be reported at the meeting.

**3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

To receive the minutes of the meetings held on 26 January 2026.

1 - 2

**4. Lower Central Gardens Trust Board Spring Meeting**

The report provides service update information to the Lower Gardens Trust Board to demonstrate the Council commitment to maintain the public gardens known as "The Lower Central Gardens" in Bournemouth for the recreation and enjoyment of the public in accordance with the terms of the Charity Scheme made by the Charity Commission on the 13 May 2011

3 - 10

Items include:

- Appointment process for Co-Opted Members for Trust Board
- Events programme
- Arts & Makers market
- Urban Forest Strategy and Nature Recovery Strategy application within the Gardens.
- Council Directorates updates

The report provides information to note whilst also seeking support and approval to proceed with workstreams.

**5. Future Meeting Dates and Work**

To note, discuss and agree items of business for the Trust Board to consider at future meetings. Also, to confirm dates of future meetings.

No other items of business can be considered unless the Chairman decides the matter is urgent for reasons that must be specified and recorded in the Minutes.

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## LOWER CENTRAL GARDENS TRUST BOARD

MONDAY, 26TH JANUARY, 2026

**Present:** Councillor Matthew Gillett in the Chair

Councillors Cllr J Martin (Vice-Chair), Cllr B Nanovo  
and Cllr L Williams

**73 Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

**74 Declarations of Interests**

No declarations of interest were made.

**75 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2025 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**76 Financial Statements 2024-25**

Stephen White, Company Accountant, presented the Financial Statements for 2024/25 together with the Letter of Representation, Audit Findings Report and Comfort Letter. It was a statutory requirement to agree the annual financial statements for the Lower Central Gardens Trust and submit them to the Charity Commission by 31 January each year. The Board was asked to review and approve the financial statements and the Letter of Representation prior to them being signed off by the Cabinet Member for Climate Response, Environment and Energy.

The Board was given summary of the four appendices accompanying the report was also provided. The Letter of Representation was described as a standard audit requirement. The Audit Findings Report confirmed an unmodified (green) audit opinion, with three audit observations relating to ledger extraction, VAT arrangements and a delay in recharging electricity costs, all of which were addressed by officers. The Comfort Letter confirmed the Council's continued financial support for at least 12 months following the approval of the accounts. **ACTION**

In response to a written question from Cllr Bartlett regarding income associated with the Pavilion, the Board was advised that the Pavilion is leased by the Trust to the Council at nil consideration, and therefore any income derived through BH Live does not form part of the Trust's accounts. Officers agreed to confirm the length of the lease and report back.

**RESOLVED that the Board approve the financial statements and the Letter of Representation for the financial year 2024-25.**

**77 Future Meeting Dates and Work**

The Board received an update on items proposed for future meetings. It was noted that a report outlining the process for appointing new Co-opted Members would be brought to the next meeting, together with a briefing on the Council's Nature Recovery Strategy and Urban Forest Strategy and how these relate to the Lower Central Gardens.

**Monday, 26th January, 2026**

Members raised matters relating to lighting, accessibility and tree management, and it was agreed that these would be considered as part of the forthcoming report. The Board also discussed opportunities for additional summer events, and it was agreed that an informal meeting with Board Members would take place to explore potential options. An update was provided confirming that a repayment plan had been agreed in relation to outstanding rent arrears.

Officers confirmed that a further review of lighting would be undertaken and that an update would be reported back to the Board. It was agreed that the May meeting would be brought forward to March in order to receive an update report, and it was noted that an extra meeting between May and January would be considered if an update was required before January 2027. It was confirmed that the March meeting would be arranged and confirmed outside the meeting.

The Board also noted that future meetings were scheduled for 18 May 2026 and 25 January 2027, although it was confirmed that the May meeting would be brought forward to March.

**Duration of the meeting:** 10.00 - 10.30 am

Chairman at the meeting on  
Monday, 26 January 2026

## LOWER CENTRAL GARDENS TRUST BOARD



Report subject	<b>Lower Central Gardens Trust Board Spring Meeting</b>
Meeting date	23 March 2026
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The report provides service update information to the Lower Gardens Trust Board to demonstrate the Council commitment to maintain the public gardens known as "The Lower Central Gardens" in Bournemouth for the recreation and enjoyment of the public in accordance with the terms of the Charity Scheme made by the Charity Commission on the 13 May 2011</p> <p>Items include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment process for Co-Opted Members for Trust Board</li> <li>• Events programme</li> <li>• Arts &amp; Makers market</li> <li>• Urban Forest Strategy and Nature Recovery Strategy application within the Gardens.</li> <li>• Council Directorates updates</li> </ul> <p>The report provides information to note whilst also seeking support and approval to proceed with workstreams.</p>
Recommendations	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <p><b>(a) The Trustees approve the advertisement and commencement of recruitment of new Co-Opted Board Members</b></p> <p><b>(b) The Trustees approve the formation of a sub group to develop site plans for the gardens to support deliverables of adopted Council strategies building sustainability and improving nature and health and wellbeing outcomes.</b></p> <p><b>(c) The Trustees approve the approach for the 2026 Art &amp; Makers market.</b></p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>To ensure the Trust Board operates effectively.</p> <p>To enable the development of plans to support the sustainability of the gardens for future generations and wildlife.</p> <p>To enable Officers to progress with an offer that enables the makers market area to have an offer for the 2026/27 season.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Andy Hadley Portfolio Holder for Climate Response Environment & Energy Councillor Richard Herrett – Portfolio Holder for Destination, Leisure and Commercial Operations
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton – Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Kate Langdown – Director of Environment Amanda Barrie – Director of Commercial Operations Helen Wildman – Head of Leisure & Events Martin Whitchurch – Strategic Lead for Greenspaces & Conservation
Wards	Bournemouth Central
Classification	Update & Decision

## Background

1. The Lower & Central Gardens Trust (LCGT) was created in 1873 under an Indenture (legal agreement) between BCP Council's predecessor body the Bournemouth Commissioners and Sir George Eliot Meyrick Tapps Gervis. The day-to-day control and management of the Lower Central Gardens and hence the charity, was varied by s.29 Bournemouth Borough Council Act 1985. This vested in the Council the general power to use, control and manage the Lower Central Gardens.
2. The object of the charity is the provision of open space for the purpose of recreation and enjoyment of the public.

## Appointment process for Co-Opted Members for Trust Board

3. In accordance with the Rules of the Trust Board and in line with current vacancies, the Trust Board may in addition to the maximum number of five elected Trust Board Members appoint not less than three nor more than four co-opted Trust Board Members.
4. Each appointment of a co-opted Trust Board Member shall be made at a meeting of the Council Cabinet acting as Trustee for the Charity and shall take effect from the end of that meeting.
5. Co-opted Trust Board Members shall not be members of the Council but shall be entitled to vote on resolutions of the Trust Board. An initial term of appointment is restricted to three years. Notice of intent to resign from the role can be given at any time, no 'period of notice is required'. This is a voluntary role with financial reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses to attend Board and any other associated supporting meetings.

6. It is proposed that the opportunities should be advertised on the BCP Council recruitment website and promoted through Community Action Partnerships, Bournemouth Town Centre Citizen Panel and other suitable routes as examples.
7. A draft advertisement and role description has been produced, see Appendix 1. Officers seek comment on the documents and consideration of approval to proceed.

### **2026/2027 Events programme**

8. As per previous years there are a number of small minor events planned such as duck races and bandstand performances dealt with by the events team under the delegated authority for Commercial Operations.
9. In addition to these points 10 – 14 detail the larger events planned.
10. South Coast Makers Market (1 day monthly 2026) – new small event proposal for 6 stalls within the tunnel path of local businesses and charities as an extension to the Bobby's market using hardstanding.
11. Bournemouth Bay Run (22 March 2026) – annual running event with the race village in front of the bandstand.
12. Arts by the Sea Festival (26 March / 25 & 26 September 2026) – annual festival with arts installations and performances throughout the Lower Gardens, Seafront and Town Centre. 26 March will see a single artist performance as a promotional event.
13. Run Bournemouth (10 & 11 October 2026) – annual running event primarily along the seafront between Bournemouth and Hengistbury Head with some elements utilising Pavilion Terrace, Street Food Corner and Pinewalk Bandstand.
14. Bournemouth Christmas (Nov & Dec 2026) – annual Christmas event consisting of ice rink and lighting through the Lower Gardens.
15. Members of the committee recently met to discuss future events they would like to see within the Lower Central Gardens.
16. Following this, the events team are taking forward a targeted promotion of bandstand opportunities to include both dance and musical performances with an aim to increase usage throughout the summer.
17. The Events Framework is now in place with a public guidance document for organising events on Council land for any community organiser looking to utilise the Lower Gardens.

### **Arts & Makers market**

18. Following the discussion at the last meeting, Commercial Operations took forward the part year review with the trial operator for the Arts & Makers market.
19. The operator has decided not to continue past the trial and therefore there is not currently an operator for the 2026 season.
20. One of the existing artists who exhibits, has come forward with a proposal to run the market on a year's trial as an individual. Due to a procurement exercise already having been undertaken previously, we are able to work on an expression of interest basis and have received no other expressions to date.
21. The artist would pay a small site hire fee, taking all the booking income, marketing the offer and managing the site on a daily basis.

22. Any surplus from the bookings would be invested into the promotion and maintenance enabling a cost neutral operation for the Council.
23. This proposal enables the community to manage and run this valuable asset in the Lower Gardens.
24. The alternative options would be to either close the market or manage it in house which is resource intensive and a staffing cost to the council.
25. A review will be taken after the 2026 season on the operation.

### **Urban Forest Strategy and Nature Recovery Strategy application within the Gardens**

26. The Council has adopted key two Greenspace Strategies (details of which can be found within Background papers). As a key part of BCP's historic public parks and open spaces LCGT could play an important role in realising these priorities and ambitions for the future sustainability of the gardens, its wildlife and ecology alongside wellbeing health benefits to its users.
27. The Board is asked to support the establishment of a subgroup to develop on site plans for the gardens to support the aims of the adopted strategies, aligned where appropriate to support the national goal of protecting or managing 30 per cent of land, rivers and seas for nature by 2030.

### **Council Directorates updates Grounds Maintenance**

28. The team are just concluding the annual Winter works programme as part of planned maintenance activities.
29. Following the dismantling and removal of the Ice Rink and associated structures, the process of grounds reinstatement commenced in mid February when weather conditions permitted. Compressed air decompaction has been carried out across the entire site to open the soil structure up and increase drainage along with repairs and reinstatement to benches and knee railings removed to facilitate the event.
30. Teams have now commenced work to level the ground where needed, selective weed spraying, seeding, and fertilising. This work will be supported by ongoing watering and hand seeding any patches that don't take from the original sowing as required. Full restoration timelines will be subject to ongoing weather conditions.

### **Summary of financial implications**

31. All reinstatement/repairs to the gardens following an event are paid for by the event organisers including specialist contracted services.

### **Summary of legal implications**

32. The recruitment of co-opted members of the Trust will be undertaken utilising the Council's recruitment system. Interviews will be undertaken by Trust Board Members and Officers will recommendations for appointment made to Cabinet for appointment.

### **Summary of human resources implications**

33. Resource within the existing Strategic Greenspace team will be allocated to support the development of delivery plans for tree planting and wider nature recovery activities to be co designed with Trust Board Members.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

34. The land contained within the Trust continues to be managed in a way that seeks to protect its future with sustainable planting to improve biodiversity and growing impacts of climate change.
35. The development of a delivery plan to replace and increase tree canopy cover alongside wider nature recovery initiatives will further support the environmental sustainability of the gardens

### **Summary of public health implications**

36. Access to good-quality, well-maintained public spaces can help to improve physical and mental health by encouraging individuals to walk more, to play sport, or simply to enjoy a green and natural environment. Parks create important opportunities for social integration and health and wellbeing outcomes. Lower Central Gardens positively contributes towards this outcome.
37. The implementation of deliverables within LCG to support the Council's Urban Forest Strategy and Nature Recovery Strategy will bring positive evidenced public health benefits.

### **Summary of equality implications**

38. There are no equality implications from this report, the LCG remains a public open space for the benefit of all to enjoy.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

39. A decision not to progress the Arts and Makers Market expression of interest received would result in no current operator being identified for the 2026 season.
40. Previous expressions of interest in the independent board membership roles have not realised formally interest, the Board has historically received limited interest in the roles available. Interest levels in this formal process will be back to a future board meeting.

### **Background papers**

[BCP Council Urban Forest Strategy](#)

[Dorset Nature Recovery Strategy](#)

### **Appendices**

Appendix One – Draft Advertisement and Role Description for Co-Opted Board Member

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**BCP Council**  
**The Charity Commission for England & Wales**  
**Lower Central Gardens Trust Board Co-Opted Member Vacancy**



**Do you have the time and skills to make a positive and independent contribution to Lower Central Gardens Trust Board?**

The Lower Central Gardens Trust Board is looking for new Co-opted Trust Board Members to join our board. Our trust board members volunteer their time and bring their experience and expertise to support the object of the Charity.

***'to maintain the public gardens known as "The Lower Central Gardens" in Bournemouth for the recreation and enjoyment of the public'.***

The Council is the sole managing trustee of the Charity.

The Lower Central Trust Board is seeking expressions of interest for this voluntary role from those who might be interested in joining the Board, with a passion for the listed gardens and the important role it serves to the enjoyment of central Bournemouth. We would particularly like to hear from you if you have experience in landscape conservation and planning; events, fundraising, grant applications.

We're looking for candidates who come from a broad spectrum of life experiences and life stages. We want our board to be as diverse and representative of the communities that we serve and seek to support.

Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to good governance and sound financial management and act solely in the best interests of the Charity working with and alongside elected Councillors in managing the Charity, for the people of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

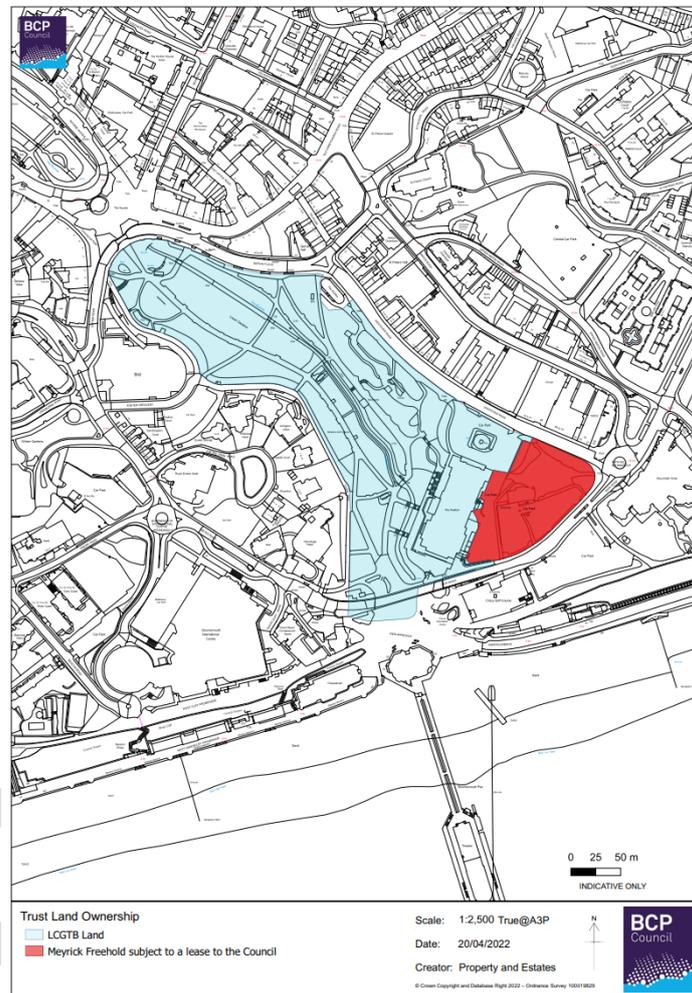
**Brief Role Description**

- Hold an overriding duty to act in the best interests of the Charity and in accordance with the provisions of the 2011 Charity Scheme and the 1985 Act.
- To be an independent voting member of the Lower Central Gardens Trust Board
- To support activities that ensure the heritage and sustainability of the gardens is protected whilst balancing meeting the needs/wants of our communities and opportunities to generate income that can be reinvested in the gardens.
- To receive and consider reports to the Board including financial.
- To provide challenge and ask questions that draw out relevant facts and explanations

**Eligibility**

- Applicants must be over the age of 18
- Able to commit to being present as a minimum 3 – 4 board meetings per annum.
- Not have any interest in property belonging to the Charity or receive remuneration or be interested (otherwise than as a Trust Board Member) in any contract entered into by the Trust Board.

## Land within Trust Board



### The contribution you will make

Key role in supporting the ongoing vitality of one of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole's most historical and icon gardens leading to our award winning golden seafront

Most of our board member contributions happens through attending and participating in our board meetings which take place three to four times a year, usually in person at BCP Council Offices in Bournemouth but sometimes involve online and on site contributions.

### Appointment Process

Applications should be made via [Jobs and careers with BCP Council](#)  
Appointment of a co-opted Trust Board Member shall be made at a meeting of the Council Cabinet acting as Trustee for the Charity.