# **Annex 13 - “Board Champions” Terms of Reference**

**Version Control Note**

At its meeting of 22 May 2019, The EHRC Board agreed these terms of reference for Commissioners acting as individual ‘Board Champions’ to work programmes being carried out or led by officers. They supersede the Terms of Reference for ‘Board Buddies’, agreed by the Board on 3 July 2017

**Aim**

1. Board Champions are intended to help the Commission make the most of individual Board members’ expertise, profile and networks, in a light touch way that complements the executive’s project and programme management architecture.

**The role of Board Champions**

2. Board Champions will be linked to a key project, programme of work, Priority Aim or functional area.

3. The precise nature of the role will vary for each Champion. It could include any or all of the following areas:

a) advice during the early development of ideas and planning of a work programme;

b) providing a steer and direction on the expectations of the Board;

c) acting as a “sounding board”;

d) networking;

e) acting as a champion or ambassador for the project internally or externally;

f) considering papers through the lens of an Aim or functional area, helping to ensure that wider implications, linkages, opportunities and risks are not missed; and

g) supporting officers in bringing matters to the Board, advising and acting as a liaison point between the team and Commissioners.

4. Board Champions should complement and not cut across executive decision making processes or operational structures. Individual Commissioners can provide a conduit to the Board and can escalate issues to the Board. They do not, in their role as Board Champions, have decision-making powers delegated to them by the Board and should be clear that they are acting as advisors and advocates rather than decision makers.

## **Assignment of Champions**

5. Typically Champions will be matched by mutual agreement and the assignment of Champions must be duly recorded and disseminated to relevant Board members and Officers. If necessary, after collective and/or individual discussion with Commissioners and with advice from the Executive Group, the Chair may assign Commissioners to champion projects, aims or functional areas.

6. The Chair may, at any time, redeploy Champions in the light of changes to the business plan; changes to projects or work programmes; changes to the composition of the Board; or other exigencies.

7. Where Champions’ responsibilities overlap (for example in relation to a possible speaking engagement), those Commissioners, advised by the relevant lead officers, should decide between themselves how the task should be allocated, including whether the cross-cutting nature of the task makes it more appropriate to be passed to the Chair or Deputy Chair.

## **Duration of Champion roles**

8. This will varybut will be determined by the work plans and milestones for the area of work to be championed, or expiry of the Commissioner’s term of appointment. Commissioners are not expected to take on champion responsibilities beyond the period set out in the Business Plan.

## **Time commitment and remuneration**

9. Champions will not generally be involved in the day-to-day operational activities of the work they champion.

10. There is no set time commitment for Champions. As a guide, however, Commissioners might expect to spend between two and four days per year championing a work programme.

11. As set out in “Fees and expenses guidance for EHRC Commissioners and Committee members”, Commissioners are responsible for managing their own time commitments and ensuring that they do not exceed the allowance of remunerated days set out in their terms of appointment. The EHRC Chair will only exceptionally and by prior written agreement agree to additional days’ remuneration, and ‘excess’ days of Champion activity will not normally be remunerated. It is at Commissioners’ own discretion as to whether they contribute additional days on a *pro bono* basis.

## **Executive support for Champions**

12. Championing activity is intended to be an integral part of project and programme management and there is no separate central executive facilitation of this work. Rather it is down to lead officers and Champions to arrange an appropriate and proportionate schedule of contact and engagement.

13. Champions should therefore, be mindful of the capacity of officers and must be flexible in their approach to offering and providing advice. Likewise, in seeking it, officers should have in mind that Commissioners have numerous other EHRC and non-EHRC commitments.

## **The role of the Commission’s Statutory Committees and the Disability Advisory Committee**

14. Members of the Scotland and Wales Committees and the Disability Advisory Committee, like Board members, have valuable expertise, profile and networks, which can support the Commission’s work. The Scotland, Wales and Disability Advisory Committee Chairs, with advice from the Executive Directors for Scotland and Wales and Strategic Aim lead officers may, therefore, make arrangements for their members to provide a champion role. Such work by Committee members should follow the principles set out in these Terms of Reference.

## **Oversight and review**

15. The Deputy Chair of the Commission will have responsibility for oversight of the Board Champions programme and shall report on and any issues arising to the Board, as they feel necessary. If Commissioners have concerns about the effectiveness of the scheme, then they should escalate them via the Deputy Chair.

16. The Executive Group will also monitor the scheme. Officers should escalate any concerns about the effectiveness of the scheme initially through their line management to the Executive Group.

17. The Deputy Chair will report on the effectiveness of these arrangements as a whole to the Board in line with wider Board effectiveness review arrangements.