

Press release: Consumer Council for Water Board member appointments

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has appointed two new independent members to the Board of the Consumer Council for Water.

Robert Wilson and Alison Austin have been appointed for four years commencing on 1 July 2018. Board members provide non-executive leadership challenge and support to the executive through regular Board meetings, committees and groups.

The Consumer Council for Water is the voice of water and sewerage customers in England and Wales. It represents the views of customers to Government, the regulators and water companies. It also handles complaints about water companies where customers are not satisfied with a company's performance.

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. The appointments have been made in accordance with the Ministerial Governance Code on Public Appointments.

There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if significant) in the last five years to be declared. Robert Wilson has declared that he held ministerial office for the Conservative party.

Consumer Council for Water Board members receive remuneration of £7,812 per annum based on a minimum time commitment of 2 days a month.

Biographies

Rob Wilson is the current Chair of The Community Bank and was previously Chair of an IT company. Until June 2017, Rob was a Minister at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and prior to this was a Minister for Cabinet Office. During his time at the Cabinet Office, Rob was responsible for reforming the charity fundraising and the National Citizen Service as well as implementing the Prime Minister's 'Big Society' agenda.

Alison Austin has more than 25 years of consumer affairs experience, having led sustainability, environmental, food safety, corporate and public affairs work for Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd. She established her own sustainability consultancy practice in 2009. She is presently the Independent Board member of Seafish and also chairs their Remuneration Committee.

Alison chaired the Defra-appointed Seafood Industry Expert Group from 2016 to 2018 which resulted in a 25 year plan for a thriving seafood industry in England – Seafood 2040, a strategic framework for England. Alison is currently a Trustee of the Green Alliance, chair of the Soil Association Certification Scrutiny Committee and also the SGS Independent Advisory Committee on Climate change for SGS UK Ltd.

Previously she was a Board member and then Trustee of the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) where she sat on the Audit and Risk Committee.

Alison was awarded the OBE in 2000 for services to sustainable development.