

Challenges and benefits of expansion

Over the years, we have identified some solutions (“○”) to the impacts (“●”) of the larger structure, listed below.

- Efficiency: Less consistency or oversight, a higher proportion of time in meetings or reading and writing minutes
 - Clear division of labour to avoid teams repeating work
 - Additional ‘required reading’ outside work time
- Speed of decision-making and change: May be slower than ideal
 - Time-sensitive decisions devolved to teams, Forum, or EGM
 - Regular meetings and reviews of systems to encourage scrutiny and catalyse change
- Engagement: Less multitasking and more specialisation risks decreased connection to the business as a whole and greater identification with teams
 - Small groups and meetings to build confidence in speaking up
 - Feedback and communication pathways to keep all members informed and involved (see Communication Appendix)
- Accountability and scrutiny: Specialisation also leads to lack of awareness
 - Fortnightly reports to forum and quarterly reports at MMs
 - Annual member reviews and annual peer (team) reviews
 - Robust individual and team job descriptions
 - Good procedures to deal with conflicts of interest
- Consensus: Less frequent face-to-face contact
 - Formal systems to maintain group cohesion (Training, Away Day, etc.)
 - Forum attendants as representatives for those not present
- Shared responsibility: Risk of people hiding from or hoarding responsibility
 - Ensure good balance of front-of-house and administrative work
 - Regular rotation of elected Team Overviews
 - Active chairing to encourage quieter voices and subdue louder ones
- Working environment: Flexibility and ad-hoc planning more difficult
 - Greater reliance on rotas and advance planning

In addition, despite the difficulties inherent in a larger business, the expanded membership offers many benefits. A few follow.

- A diverse member job description, which comprises both front-of-house and administrative work
- Increased ability to share owner responsibilities
- A larger membership with a wider pool of skills and ideas
- More people in secure, sustainable work, as per our Principles of Purpose