

COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the impact on the political balance of the Council, the allocation of Committee seats and appointment of committee chairmen following the District council elections on 2 May 2024.

2 Details

Review of Political Proportionality

- 2.1 The Council is asked to appoint the committees it requires for the next municipal year, agree their size, to review formally the proportional political allocation of places on committees and to adopt a scheme of proportionality for the 2024/25 municipal year.
- 2.2 The committees which it is proposed to establish for the 2024/25 municipal year, and their proposed size, are set out at Annex A to this report. It also sets out the political proportionality overall.
- 2.3 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires local authorities to review annually committee membership and political representation. By law, seats on committees must be allocated in proportion to the political composition of the Council.
- 2.4 Four groups have been formed: the Liberal Democrats Group, the Conservative Group, the Green Group, and the Labour Group. There is also one councillor sitting as an independent councillor. The number of seats of each group on the Council and the resulting percentages are as follows:

	Liberal Democrat	Conservative	Labour	Green	Independent	Total
Number of Councillors	21	11	3	3	1*	39
Proportion (%)	53.85	28.21	7.69	7.69	2.56	100.0

*It should be noted that the minimum number required to make up a political group is 2

- 2.5 In determining the allocation of seats on committees, the proportion that each political group forms of the total membership of the Council is applied to the total number of elected councillor seats on each committee. Fractional entitlements of less than one half are rounded down and entitlements of one half or more are rounded up. So that this process of rounding does not result in disproportionate advantage to one political group, the aggregate membership of all the committees must also be in line with the proportions on the Council.
- 2.6 In accordance with the legislation, the following principles should apply to the allocation of seats as far as reasonably practicable:
- That not all the seats on the body to which appointments are being made are allocated to the same political group;
 - That the majority of the seats on each committee are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;

- iii. Subject to (1) and (2) above, when allocating seats to a political group, the total number of their seats across all the ordinary committees of the Council, must reflect their proportion of the authority's membership; and
 - iv. Subject to (1) to (3) above, that the number of seats on each committee is as far as possible in proportion to the group's membership of the authority.
- 2.7 The majority of seats on each committee have to be allocated to the political group that forms the majority of the authority's membership to comply with the second principle (paragraph 2.3ii above).
- 2.8 The seats will need to be shared out proportionately across the committees to ensure that the third principle (paragraph 2.5iii above) is applied. The fourth principle is then applied to ensure that the seats then allocated are not unfairly weighted. A Group's seat on a committee will be allocated automatically in terms of whole numbers, with numbers rounded up or down to the nearest whole number as appropriate.

3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Council has no option but to achieve political proportionality. Where it is not possible to achieve absolute proportionality for each committee, the scheme agreed must achieve overall proportionality across all the committees of the Council.
- 3.2 It is proposed that the committees listed in Annex A be appointed with the composition shown. The Annex incorporates a scheme of proportionality for 2024/25. This scheme achieves the required balance between the four political groups on the Council.

4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct policy or budget consequences arising from this report.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial consequences arising from this report.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 Legal implications are contained in the main body of this report.

7 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct equal opportunities implications arising from this report.

8 Recommendations

- 8.1 The Council is advised to RESOLVE that:
- i. the committees as set out at Annex A be appointed with the committee sizes shown; and
 - ii. the scheme of proportionality as set out at Annex A be adopted for 2024/25.
 - iii. Note the political proportionality calculations at Annex B.

Annexes

Annex A – Schedule of Political Proportionality of Committees

Annex B – Political proportionality calculations