

## Annual Council 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Committee Membership and appointment of Chair/Vice Chairs of Committees</b>
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### List of Appendices

#### **Appendix A – Proportionality Report**

#### **Appendix B - Copy of committee membership nominations received from the recognised political groups and Copy of Chair/Vice Chair nominations received.**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1. For Annual Council to confirm the membership of the Council committees and bodies, where it is Council's responsibility to make such appointments.

### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1. The appendices accompanying the report detail the proposed allocation of committee seats to the recognised political groups, the nominations received from said groups and to confirm the appointment of Chairs and Vice Chairs where Council is required to make such appointments.

### **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1. It is recommended that Annual Council:
- a) note the proportionality rules applied (as detailed in Appendix A);
  - b) note the appointments made by the respective recognised political groups to the governance structure (as detailed in Appendix B);
  - c) receive nominations for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair (as detailed in Appendix B) and make appointments as required;
  - d) note that the Officer Scheme of Delegation grants authority to the Monitoring Officer to make any in-year changes to the membership of committees on behalf of the Council, in consultation with the Leaders of the political groups.

- 3.2. *Reason for Recommendation* –
- To ensure that the political balance of the Council is applied to the governance structure of the Council, under law and approved guidelines contained in the Council Constitution.
- 3.3. *Alternative Options Considered* –
- Council may depart from the political balance requirements as set out in this report, but only if no member votes against the resolution - in accordance with the law.

#### **4. Report Background**

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- 4.1. The Council must allocate seats on committees and other prescribed bodies to give effect to the political balance rules. The rules for the allocation of seats are set out in Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.
- 4.2. Section 15(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the principles as follows:
- (a) That not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same political group (if the rules apply to that body);
  - (b) That the majority of the seats on the body is allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
  - (c) Subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority; and
  - (d) Subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of the seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.
- 4.3. For political balance, a group is required to have at least two members in order to be formally constituted as a political group. There is one independent member on the Council.
- 4.4. The Council can only depart from these rules by passing a resolution with no member voting against the resolution.
- 4.5. This report is based on the principles detailed above. The report is requested to be agreed by Council to ensure the seats are allocated using the appropriate principles as based in law.

## 5. Issues and Choices

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5.1. As of 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023, the political group composition of the Council was as follows: -

	<b>Council</b>	<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Green Alliance</b>
<b>Members</b>	78	56	16	5
<b>%</b>	100	72.73	20.78	6.49

5.2. Attached as Appendix A details how the balance has been applied to the Council's governance structure, considering the law and local preferences expressed in the approved Constitution.

5.3. Bodies to which proportionality does not or need not apply include –

- The Executive
- Bodies established by the Executive (e.g., Executive Advisory Panels, although Council has agreed that they should be cross-party)
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Joint bodies established by the Executive.

5.4. In the establishment of the two Area Planning Committees, Council agreed that membership of these committees should reflect the political balance of the local area only. The areas to be under the authority of each of the two respective committees were previously agreed by Council.

5.5. It should be noted that some appointments are made by the Leader of the Council and are not in the gift of Annual Council.

5.6. The recognised political groups have been invited to submit their nominations for the committee seats allocated to them. Details of the nominations received are detailed in Appendix B.

5.7. With reference to appointment of Chairs and Vice Chairs of the respective bodies, where appropriate, Annual Council are being invited to make such appointments. See Appendix B for details.

## 6. Next Steps

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6.1. Arising from appointments to committees made by Group Leaders, Democratic Services will provide details of committee appointments, dates of meetings and any training requirements to the new committee members.

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## **7. Implications (including financial implications)**

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### **7.1. Resources and Financial**

- 7.1.1. Any Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) applicable will be paid subject to the Council's approved Member Allowance Scheme.

### **7.2. Legal and Governance**

- 7.2.1. The Council must allocate seats on committees and other prescribed bodies to give effect to the political balance rules. The rules for the allocation of seats are set out in Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

### **7.3. Relevant Policies and Plans**

- 7.3.1. The Council's meeting procedure rules (Part 3.2 of the Constitution) sets out that it is the responsibility of full Council to approve the allocation of seats in accordance with political balance rules.
- 7.3.2. The terms of reference for Area Planning Committees (Part 4.3 of the Constitution) sets out the requirement for political balance to be drawn from within each of the defined planning committee areas.
- 7.3.3. The Officer Scheme of Delegation (Part 9.2 of the Constitution) sets out the authority of the Director of Customer and Governance (Monitoring Officer) to make in year changes to the membership of committees, and joint boards and committees and to make in year nominations or appointments to outside bodies, in consultation with the Leaders of the political groups represented on the Council.

### **7.4. Risk**

- 7.4.1. Council is required to approve the allocation of seats on the respective bodies, with adherence to the law and approved local choice detailed within the approved Constitution. Failure to comply may leave the Council open to challenge and disrupt the decision-making process.

### **7.5. Consultation**

- 7.5.1. The recognised political groups have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

### **7.6. Consideration by Scrutiny**

- 7.6.1. Not applicable to this report.

**7.7. Equality implications**

7.7.1. There are no discernible equality implications arising from the contents of this report.

**7.8. Climate Impact**

7.8.1. Not applicable to this report.

**7.9. Community Impact**

7.9.1. Not applicable to this report.

**7.10. Crime and Disorder Impact**

7.10.1. Not applicable to this report.

**8. Background Papers**

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8.1. [North Northamptonshire Council Constitution](#)

[The Local Government and Housing Act 1989](#)

[The Local Government \(Committees and Political Groups\) Regulations 1990](#)