



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

**to
COUNCIL
1 OCTOBER 2020**

LEADERS AND COMPOSITION OF POLITICAL GROUPS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To ratify the Leader Designate for Maldon District Council

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is asked:

- (i) to consider the ratification of the Leader-designate as Leader of the Council until the Statutory Annual meeting of the Council;
- (ii) in the event that the Council does not confirm the Leader-designate, to elect the Leader of the Council until the Statutory Annual meeting of the Council;

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1 Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council

3.1.1 On 17 August 2020 the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council resigned from their respective positions. In accordance with the Council's Constitution (Part 2: Articles of the Constitution – Article 2 Members of the Council) the Council must appoint a Leader.

3.1.2 The following extract from the Constitution sets out the process for annually selecting the Leader of the Council. The Constitution advises that should this post become vacant the same process will be applied for either ratifying or electing the Leader:

“The Leader is the Council's political head, being the leader of the largest political group¹ on the Council as notified annually to the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Prior to each annual meeting, this person will be recognised as ‘Leader-designate of the Council. If there is no single largest political group the Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager is entitled for the purposes of these arrangements to regard the Leader of whichever of the equal largest groups which was previously the larger

¹ The term ‘Political Group’ shall have the meaning as in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

as Leader-designate of the Council until the Council by resolution determines otherwise.

At each annual meeting the Council is asked to ratify that person as the Leader of the Council. If it does not do so it must elect a Leader. The Council will also appoint annually a Deputy Leader who will deputise for the Leader. While under governance arrangements adopted by the Council the Leader has no executive or delegated powers as such, the Leader is in a position of influence and works closely with the service Directors.”

- 3.1.3 On 20 August 2020, Members were advised that the Leader Designate of the Council was Councillor Elaine Bamford, having been selected as Leader of the Conservative Group at its last meeting. Councillor Bamford is identified as Leader Designate because at the time the Conservative Group were the largest political group, with 13 members. Although the Constitution has not been written with such frequent change in mind, the interpretation of the paragraph above is that this Designate may stand until the Statutory Annual meeting.

3.2 Composition of Political Groups

- 3.2.1 As at 8 September 2020, the composition of the Political Groups on the Council are as follows:

Conservative Group (11 Members)	Leader	Councillor E L Bamford
	Members	Councillors Miss A M Beale, Mrs P A Channer CC, M F L Durham CC, J L Fleming, A L Hull, K W Jarvis, J V Keyes, C P Morley, R H Siddall, and Miss S White
Independent Group (12 Members)	Leader:	Councillor M S Heard
	Members	Councillors M G Bassenger, B S Beale MBE, V J Bell, M R Edwards, C Mayes, S P Nunn, Mrs N G F Shaughnessy, N Skeens, W Stamp, J C Stilts and C Swain

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Following appointment of a Leader Designate at the Conservative group meeting on 19 August 2020, Council are asked to ratify this position. The position of Leader will also be subject to ratification again at Statutory Annual Council, as per the Council’s Constitution.

5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 The Leader of the Council is the Council’s political head, working across all strategic themes.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The Leader of the Council acts as a political contact for customers and promotes the long-term financial, business and economic stability of the Council.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – a Leader designate should be appointed to help represent Maldon District Council
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – None.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – None.

Background Papers:

The Council's Constitution.

The Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Enquiries to: Cheryl Hughes, Programmes, Performance and Governance Manager.