



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

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**to  
ANNUAL COUNCIL  
12 MAY 2022**

**APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To appoint serving Members to Committees for the Municipal year to May 2023.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) That the allocation of seats on Committees as set out in section 3.6 below, be ratified;
- (ii) That the Member nominations set out in **APPENDIX A**, be approved;
- (iii) That where nominations have not been received, to appoint Members to these Committee positions;
- (iv) That for the purposes of Substitutes, serving Performance, Governance & Audit and Strategy & Resources Committees Members are allowed to sit on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (v) That Members appoint two Parish / Town Councillors for Joint Standards Committee from the list of three nominees sent to all Members on 9 May 2022.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 Under Section 15(1)(b) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council is required at its Annual Meeting to review the representation of different Political Groups on committees of the authority.
- 3.2 In carrying out such a review and in making appointments to committees following that review, the Council is under a duty only to make such appointments as give effect to the principles contained in Section 15(5) of the above Act. In essence, this requires local authorities to review committee membership and political representation annually. By law, seats on committees must be allocated in proportion to the political composition of the Council. In addition, the total number of seats across all of the committees must reflect the overall political balance of the Council.

3.3 Notification has been made to me of three Political Groups constituted for the purposes of the political balance provisions namely:

|                    |         |   |
|--------------------|---------|---|
| Independent Group  | Leader  | Councillor R H Siddall,   |
|                    | Members | Councillors: M G Bassenger,<br>B S Beale MBE,<br>V J Bell,<br>M R Edwards,<br>M S Heard,<br>C Mayes,<br>N G F Shaughnessy,<br>N J Skeens,<br>E L Stephens,<br>Mrs J C Stilts and<br>C Swain           |
| Conservative Group | Leader  | Councillor Mrs P A Channer  |
|                    | Members | Councillors: Miss A M Beale,<br>R G Boyce MBE<br>M F L Durham CC,<br>Mrs J L Fleming CC,<br>B B Heubner,<br>A L Hull,<br>J V Keyes,<br>S J N Morgan<br>C P Morley,<br>Mrs M E Thompson and<br>S White |

3.4 There are a further seven non-aligned Members of the Council.

3.5 Neither Political Group has a majority of the Members of the Council (51% or more) so that it would have a right to request a majority on every Committee.

3.6 The Council is asked to ratify the allocation of seats on Committees in the following manner:

| Committee                            | Total Seats | Independent Group | Conservative Group | Non-Aligned combined |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Performance, Governance and Audit    | 10          | 4                 | 4                  | 2                    |
| Strategy and Resources               | 11          | 4                 | 4                  | 3                    |
| Licensing                            | 10          | 4                 | 4                  | 2                    |
| Overview and Scrutiny                | 10          | 4                 | 4                  | 2                    |
| Joint Standards                      | 8           | 3                 | 3                  | 2                    |
| Investigating and Disciplinary       | 5           | 2                 | 2                  | 1                    |
| Investigating and Disciplinary Panel | 10          | 4                 | 4                  | 2                    |
| Appointments Board                   | 6           | 2                 | 2                  | 2                    |

3.7 As agreed by the Council on 6 August 2020 (Minute No. 1128 refers), Members of the Performance, Governance & Audit and Strategy & Resources Committees are unable to serve on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This has meant Political Groups have been unable to run substitutes and small Committee turnout during the

year. Therefore, recommendation (iv) suggests an exemption to this rule for the purposes of substitutes to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The procedure rules also include the following exception to this rule: *the Chairman of the Council, the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Strategy and Resources and the Performance, Governance and Audit Committees shall not serve on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.*

3.8 In line with guidance from the Joint Secretaries, Members cannot sit on both the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee and the Investigating and Disciplinary Panel.

### 3.9 **Joint Standards Committee**

3.9.1 Two Parish / Town Councillors sit on the Joint Standards Committee. The three nominations we have received are set out in **APPENDIX A**, and Members are asked to confirm two candidates based on the details that were circulated by the Monitoring Officer.

### 3.10 **Investigating and Disciplinary Panel**

3.10.1 In addition to the Committees of the Council referred to in Procedure Rule 17, the Council is required to establish an Investigating and Disciplinary Panel (see Procedure Rule 16(11)(a)) to which Members are appointed and the political balance provisions apply. This is distinct from the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee in terms of both purpose and membership and has therefore been included in the list. The Terms of Reference for this Panel provide for a minimum of five Members of which three shall be Councillors who have not served on the initial investigation carried out by the Investigating and Disciplinary Committee and two or three Independent Persons appointed by the Council to assist the Joint Standards Committee under the Localism Act 2011.

3.10.2 The report seeks to appoint a pool of ten members that can be called upon for meetings.

### 3.11 **Appointments Board**

3.11.1 The Council is also required to appoint Members to serve on the Appointments Board. The Council and Committee Procedure Rule 17(8) provides for the constitution of this Board, to be made up of:

- Leader of the Council (or Deputy);
- Opposition Leader (or Deputy);
- Chairmen (or Vice-Chairmen) of the Strategy & Resources and the Performance, Governance & Audit Committees;
- Plus two other named Members appointed by the Council (political balance provisions shall apply).

### 3.12 **Area Planning Committees**

3.12.1 In accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 Part IV, Paragraph 16(a), the membership of the Area Planning Committees is confirmed in the attached **APPENDIX A**.

### 3.13 Training

3.13.1 Compulsory Planning training for **all Members** will take place in two groups, either the evenings of 16 and 23 May or all day on 20 May.

3.13.2 Committee Chairman training will take place in two repeated sessions via Microsoft Teams on Monday 16 May at 5pm and Wednesday 18 May at 10.30am.

## 4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The Committee seat allocation and member nominations are provided for Member review, and nominations sought for the non-aligned Council appointed vacancies.

## 5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

5.1 The Committee structure underpins the Performance and Efficiency Corporate Goal.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – None.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – None.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Specific Committees have an impact on this area.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – Specific Committees have an impact on this area.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** - Specific Committees have an impact on this area.

Background Papers: None.

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