

# South Northamptonshire Council

## Council

2 October 2019

<b>Result of Middleton Cheney By-Election, Allocation of Seats and Membership of Committees</b>
---

### Report of Chief Executive

This report is public

#### Purpose of report

To advise Council of the results of the by-election for the Middleton Cheney ward held on 12 September 2019, and to note the constitution of the council, political balance calculations and allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements following the by-election.

For the purposes of the allocation of seats subject to the political balance requirements, this report assumes that the recommendations at the previous agenda item, "Amendments to the Appointments and Personnel Committee" have been agreed. If this is not the case, alternative calculations will be tabled at the meeting.

#### 1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the results of the by-election for the Middleton Cheney ward held on 12 September 2019.
- 1.2 To note the constitution of the Council, the political balance calculations and the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements following the by-election.
- 1.3 To note the appointments and amendments to Committees in light of the revised allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements (to be advised at the meeting).

#### 2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Following the resignation of Councillor Jonathan Riley, a by-election for the vacant seat in the Middleton Cheney ward of South Northamptonshire Council was held on 12 September 2019.

- 2.2 Following a district by-election, the result is reported to Council for information. Any adjustments to the allocation of seats and substitutes and amendments to Committee membership are also reported.

### **3.0 Report Details**

#### **Middleton Cheney ward By-Election**

- 3.1 The overall turnout for the by-election for the Middleton Cheney ward held on 12 September 2019 was 26.9%.

- 3.2 The number of votes cast for the candidates was:

Mark James Allen (Liberal Democrat) – 384 votes

Alison Frazer Mitchell Eastwood (The Conservative Party Candidate) - 345 votes

Arthur Greaves (Labour Party) – 59 votes

Adam John Sear (Green Party Candidate) – 89 votes

- 3.3 Mark James Allen (Liberal Democrat) was duly elected.

#### **Constitution of the Council**

- 3.4 Following the by-election, the constitution of the council is as follows:

Conservative: 33 (79%)  
Independent: 3 (7%)  
Liberal Democrat: 6 (15%)

#### **Allocation of Seats to Proportional Committees**

- 3.5 Following the election, the allocation of seats to committees that are subject to political balance calculations are set out in the table below. The calculations assume that the recommendations set out in the previous agenda item “Amendments to the Appointments and Personnel Committee” have been approved and therefore this committee is not included in committees subject to political balance calculations
- 3.6 There are no changes to the allocation of seats to committees that are not subject to political balance calculations.
- 3.7 The position regarding those committees that are subject to political balance calculations is set out below:

<b>Political Balance</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>CON</b>	<b>IND</b>	<b>LIB DEM</b>
Appeals Committee	5	4	0	1
Budget & Financial Strategy Committee	12	9	1	2
Licensing Committee	12	<i>10 (+1)</i>	1	<i>1 (-1)</i>
Planning Committee	14	11	1	2
Planning Policy & Regeneration Strategy Committee	12	9	1	2
Scrutiny Committee	15	12	1	2
West Northamptonshire Joint Committee	4	3	0	1
<b>Proportional Total by Committee</b>	74	58	5	11
<b>Aggregate Entitlement</b>	74	58	5	11
<b>Adjustment Required</b>	N/A	+1	0	-1

3.8 As a result of the revised allocation of seats to committees that are subject to the political balance requirements, the Liberal Democrat Group is required to release one seat to the Conservative Group.

3.9 Councillor Lofts, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, has advised that he will give a seat on the Licensing Committee to the Conservative Group. This is indicated in italics in the table above.

3.10 As a result of the revised political balance calculations, the Conservative Group has one fewer member on each of the following committees:

Budget and Financial Strategy Committee  
 Planning Policy and Regeneration Strategy Committee

Councillor McCord, Leader of the Conservative Group, will advise which Members will step down from each of the above listed committees.

3.11 As a result of the revised political balance calculations, the Liberal Democrat Group has one additional member on each of the following committees:

Budget and Financial Strategy Committee  
 Planning Policy and Regeneration Strategy Committee

Councillor Lofts, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, will advise which Members he will appoint to each of the above listed committees.

- 3.12 As set out in paragraph 3.7, the Liberal Democrat Group is required to give a seat to the Conservative Group. Previously the Liberal Democrat Group was required to give a seat to the Independent Group. The revised proportionality calculations no longer require this, therefore the following change to the membership of the Appeals Committee is necessary:

Remove: Councillor Caryl Billingham (Independent Group)

Add: *Councillor Lofts, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, to advise*

- 3.13 With the exception of the Appointments and Personnel Committee (assuming recommendations at the previous agenda item agreed), all other appointments to Committees remain as appointed at the Annual Council meeting held on 15 May 2019.

## **4 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 The results of the by-election for the Middleton Cheney ward is submitted to Council for information. The Council is required to agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements and to agree the appointments to each of the Committees in accordance with the nominations made by political groups.

### **5.0 Consultation**

Political Group Leaders and Independent Group Spokesman

### **6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 6.1 The following alternative option has been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To amend the appointments to Committees. However, Council is obliged to appoint members to Committees in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group, so this option is rejected.

### **7.0 Implications**

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

Comments checked by:  
Martin Henry, Executive Director: Finance and S151 Officer  
Tel: 01327 322094, [martin.henry@southnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:martin.henry@southnorthants.gov.uk)

### Legal Implications

- 7.2 It is a legal requirement for Council to agree proportionality and appoint committees.

Comments checked by:  
Andrew Hunkin, Executive Director: Resources,  
Tel: 0300 003 0202 [andrew.hunkin@southnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.hunkin@southnorthants.gov.uk)

### Risk Implications

- 7.3 In ensuring the legal requirements are met, risk to the authority is mitigated.

Comments checked by:  
Geoff Kent, Assistant Director: Customers and Corporate Services  
Tel: 01327 322183, [geoff.kent@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:geoff.kent@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk)

## 8.0 Decision Information

### Wards Affected

All

### Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All

### Lead Councillor

None

### Document Information

Appendix No	Title
None	
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager
Contact Information	01295 221589 <a href="mailto:natasha.clark@cherwell-dc.gov.uk">natasha.clark@cherwell-dc.gov.uk</a>