

South Northamptonshire Council

Council

16 September 2020

Allocation of Seats and Membership of Committees 2020/21

Report of Chief Executive

This report is public

Purpose of report

To consider and agree the suggested constitution of Committees for the Municipal Year 2020/2021.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements (Table 1).
- 1.2 To agree the allocation of seats on committees not subject to political balance requirements (Table 2).
- 1.3 To agree the appointments to each of the Committees in accordance with the nominations made by political groups (Appendix 1).

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Annual Meeting originally scheduled for 13 May 2020 was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. It was subsequently agreed it would be held on Wednesday 16 September 2020.
- 2.2 The Council's Constitution (Part 3, 1.2) requires that at the annual meeting, Council shall:
 - Decide which committees to establish for the municipal year
 - Decide the size of those committees
 - Decide the allocation of seats and substitutes to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules
 - Receive nominations of Councillors to serve on each committee and relevant outside body

- Appoint to those committees and outside bodies except where appointment to those bodies has been delegated by the Council or is exercisable only by the Cabinet

3.0 Report Details

Constitution of the Council and Political Groups

3.1 The current constitution of the Council (42 Members) and political groups is:

Conservative: 32 (76%)
 Independent: 3 (7%)
 Liberal Democrat: 6 (14%)
 Vacancy: 1 (3%)

3.2 As a consequence of Local Government Reorganisation in Northamptonshire, South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) and Cherwell District Council (CDC) ended their joint working partnership. The formal joint committees were disbanded in May 2019 but the informal Joint Arrangements Steering Group (JASG) between the two councils was retained. Given that all services have been separated or are delivered under a service level agreement, JASG has been removed from the committee list. It was not subject to the committee proportionality requirements.

3.3 At the February 2019 Council meeting, Members agreed the establishment of a West Northamptonshire Joint Committee between councils with functions related to implementation of local government reform for Northamptonshire, particularly in respect of the operation of a shadow authority. This committee had been included in the proportionality calculations.

3.4 As the West Northamptonshire Unitary Shadow Council is now functioning with a Shadow Executive, the West Northamptonshire Joint Committee has been disbanded and is no longer included in the calculation of seats to proportional committees.

Allocation of Seats to Proportional Committees

3.5 Under the political balance regulations in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, allocations are made to political groups; any member not in a political group is consequently not automatically entitled to seats on committees (although there are no such members currently). In Table 1 below, all group percentage allocations have been rounded up. No adjustments are required.

3.6 **Table 1: Allocation of Seats of Proportional Committees**

Political Balance	TOTAL	CON	IND	LIB DEM	VACANCY
Appeals Committee	5	4	0	1	0
Budget & Financial Strategy Committee	12	9	1	2	0
Licensing	12	9	1	2	0

Committee					
Planning	14	11	1	2	0
Planning Policy & Regeneration Strategy	12	9	1	2	0
Scrutiny	15	11	1	2	1
Proportional Total by Committee	70	53	5	11	1
Aggregate Entitlement	70	53	5	11	1
Adjustment Required	N/S	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

3.8 Table 2: Allocation of Seats to Non Proportional Committees and other bodies

Committee	Seats	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Independent
Audit Committee*	6	4	1	1
Organisational Development and Personnel Committee*	8	6	1	1
Standards Committee*	5	3	1	1

* this is a departure from the proportionality rules and is therefore only permissible with no member voting against.

3.9 Notes:

Appeals Committee: members may not serve as members or substitute members of the Organisational Development and Personnel Committee.

Budget and Financial Strategy Committee: Must include the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance

Planning Policy and Regeneration Strategy Committee: Must include the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Planning

Scrutiny Committee: must not include any members of the Cabinet.

Organisational Development and Personnel Committee: at least two members must not be Cabinet members and may not include members of the Appeals Committee

- 3.9 Appendix 1 sets out members to serve on each of the committees and other bodies set out in Tables 1 and 2 in accordance with the nominations to be made by political groups.

4 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Council is required to agree the allocation of seats on committees that are subject to the political balance requirements and also on committees not subject to 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 Groups for Committee appointments

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

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

Option 1: To amend the appointments to Committees. This is rejected as the proposed appointments reflect the nominations of the political groups.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

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

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

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

Comments checked by:

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Risk Implications

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

Comments checked by:

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8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

All

Lead Councillor

None

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Committee Membership 2020/21
Background Papers	
None	
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