

To: Annual Council

Date: 9th. June 2014

Report of: Head of Law and Governance

Title of Report: Appointment of Committees for the Council year 2014-2015

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To appoint committees and the members serving on them for the Council year 2014-2015.

Executive Lead Member: Not applicable

Council is recommended to:

- 1. Note the arrangements for determining Political Groups and achieving political balance within the Political Governance arrangements.**
- 2. To appoint the bodies as currently defined within the Council's constitution and included in the table at paragraph 9 of this report.**
- 3. To agree the nominations to committees made by political groups and attached within a document circulated separately.**
- 4. To appoint a member to the Joint Oxfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 5. To agree that all members of Council will form the pool of members able to observe on appeals and some grievances.**
- 6. To authorise the Head of Law and Governance to make any changes to the constitution as a consequence of these decisions.**

Introduction

1. This report is being submitted to Annual Council under Council Procedure Rule 11.1 (g), (h) and confirms the bodies appointed by the Council, the arrangements for political groups to be formed, the arrangements to achieve political balance and the nominations to each body appointed by the Council.

Background

2. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 provides a statutory basis for the rights of minority groups to secure representation on Council committees in proportion to their representative political strengths within the Council.. To enable this the Council has to provide for:
 - Political Groups to be formed and Group Leaders elected.
 - Seats on committees to be allocated in accordance with “political balance”.

Forming Political Groups

3. Key here is the requirement of individual members to indicate a wish to be a member of any particular Political Group or cease to be a member of a Political Group. These group formations are then used within political balance calculations. A Political Group comprises 2 or more members who have indicated, by notice to the Head of Law and Governance; they wish to be part of that group. The notice must include the name of the Group Leader. Optionally groups can also name a Deputy Group Leader.
4. Members elected as “independent” are able to come together, should they wish, to form a group using the same process.
5. Once formed, changes can be made by giving notice to the Head of Law and Governance. The wishes of the group can be made know by the Group Leader or the majority of the group unless a proposal is made to change Leadership. A change of Leadership must be notified by a majority of group members.
6. Changes to group membership would require a review of the allocation of seats on committees.
7. Current group secretaries have been issued with the appropriate forms to allow this to happen.
8. The Council currently has 1 Independent Member, he does not constitute a group.

Political Balance (PB) Calculations

9. With a few exceptions Council is bound to appoint to committees using the principles of political balance. This is contained within the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and includes the following overriding principles which should be read hierarchically:

- Where there is more than one group, all seats must not be allocated to the same political group.
- The majority of seats must be allocated to the group with the majority on the Council.
- When considering all seats available for allocation the total of those given to each group should match their representation on the Council overall.
- The number of seats on each individual committee allocated to groups should match their representation on the Council overall

When making calculations officers will “round up”, at .5 and above, any resulting allocations within this formula but clearly there will be occasions when a precise mathematical allocation cannot be implemented. When this is the case Group Leaders will work with the Head of Law and Governance to agree a satisfactory arrangement that fits within the principles of the hierarchy detailed above.

10. Appendix 1 outlines the allocations to Party Groups for 2014-2015.

Appointments to Committees

11. The table below contains the current bodies appointed within the Councils governance structure and the requirements of the constitution. Since May 2012 the Council has operated within the Strong Leader and Cabinet model of Executive arrangements and Councillor Price was elected as Leader of the Council for 4 years. Elsewhere on the agenda Councillor Price will notify Council of the members he has appointed to the City Executive Board and their portfolios.

Body	Seats No.	In PB calculations	Comment
Full Council	48	No	Formed by election by halves.
City Executive Board	10	No	Appointed by the Leader of the Council
Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee	15	No	For appointment by Council This committee discharges the responsibilities contained within the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005. It must contain between 10 and 15

			members. Members must be available to attend casework panels. Convention is that the spirit of political balance will apply to this Committee.
Appeals	15	No	<p>For appointment by Council</p> <p>The Council's HR policies require that should an appeal be received against a decision to dismiss or some decisions within the grievance procedure then that hearing should be observed by a member.</p> <p>A pool of members is required. In previous years the pool has consisted of all members of Council.</p>
Oxfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1	No	<p>For appointment by Council</p> <p>The County Council invites the Council to appoint 1 member to sit on this Committee which delivers the Health Scrutiny function for Oxfordshire. This includes both public and critical health functions.</p> <p>This is a non-executive member of the administration unless they decide to allocate this to another group.</p>
General Purposes and licencing Committee	10	Yes	For appointment by Council
Appointments Committee	5	Yes	<p>For appointment by Council</p> <p>This must include 1 City Executive Board Member.</p>
Audit and Governance Committee	7	Yes	For appointment by Council
Standards	7	Yes	For appointment by Council

Committee			
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East Area Planning Committee	9	Yes	For appointment by Council No member can be a member of more than 1 planning committee or a member of the Planning Review Committee if appointed to this Committee.
West Area Planning Committee	9	Yes	For appointment by Council No member can be a member of more than 1 planning committee or a member of the Planning Review Committee if appointed to this Committee.
Planning Review Committee	9	Yes	For appointment by Council Members of this committee cannot be a member of either East or West Planning Committee.
Scrutiny Committee	12	Yes	For appointment by Council City Executive Board members cannot be members of this committee. The Council must appoint 1 Scrutiny Committee.
Disciplinary Committee	4	Yes	For appointment by Council This is for disciplinary issues for Directors and Heads of Service. Must include a City Executive Board Member.

12. The number of seats to be used in the political balance calculation is 72. An additional paper, Appendix 2 to this report, will be issued separately outlining group nominations to seats.

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List of background papers: None

Version:2