

To: Council

Date: 16 January 2026

Report of: Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer)

Title of Report: Appointment of Committees for the remainder of the Council Year 2025/2026

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	For Council to appoint committees and the members serving on those committees for the remainder of the Council year 2025-26, as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Section 15)
Key decision:	No
Cabinet Member:	N/A
Corporate Priority:	A Well Run Council.
Policy Framework:	None

Recommendation(s): That Council resolves to:	
1.	Approve the structure of the Council committees, as defined within the Council's Constitution and set out in <i>Appendix 1: Committee Structure 2025-2026</i> ;
2.	Approve the methods, calculations and conventions used in determining political representation on committees as outlined in the report and shown in <i>Appendix 2: Political Proportionalities on Council Committees 2026</i> ;
3.	Appoint to committee seats in accordance with the requirements of political proportionality and the nominations made by political groups, as shown in <i>Appendix 3: Committee Nominations 2026</i> ;
4.	Agree that all members of Council will form the pool of members able to observe on appeals and some grievances panels in accordance with the Council's policies;

Information Exempt From Publication	
N/A	N/A

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Committee Structure 2025-2026	No
Appendix 2	Political Proportionalities on Committees 2026	No
Appendix 3	Committee Nominations 2026	No

Introduction and background

1. This report invites Council to appoint to the non-executive committees for remainder of the 2025-2026 Council year, following a change in the political make-up of the authority in January 2026.
2. A further report will be brought in the new Municipal Year to reassess this following the local elections.
3. The committee structure that Council is asked to approve is attached as Appendix 1. There are no changes to the committee structure since the beginning of the municipal year, which was previously agreed on 15 May 2025.
4. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Section 15) ("The Act") provides a statutory basis for the allocation of committee seats to political groups based on principles of political proportionality. To enable this the Council has to provide for:
 - a. Political Groups to be formed and Group Leaders elected.
 - b. Seats on committees to be allocated to political groups in accordance with the requirements of the Act.
5. The political balance of the Council and its committees has been reviewed in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Appendix 2 (to be circulated in the Briefing Note) shows the political proportionalities on the committees the Council is asked to appoint to.
6. Appendix 3 (to also be circulated in the Briefing Note) shows the nominations to the seats on committees.

Political Groups

7. Individual members are required to indicate a wish to be a member of a particular political group (or cease to be a member of a political group). Political groups comprise two or more members who have indicated that they wish to be a member of that group by signing a notice to the proper officer, Director of Law, Governance and Strategy. The Group Secretaries of established groups will normally hold and co-ordinate these notices (commonly known as political group forms). The notice must include the name of the Group Leader and may include the name of the Deputy Group Leader.
8. Once political groups have been formed, changes to the membership and leadership of groups can be made by notice to the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy. A change of group leader must be notified by a majority of group members.

Political balance calculations

9. Council has a duty to appoint to most committees using the principles of political proportionality set out in the Act. These principles should be read hierarchically:
 - Where there is more than one political group, all seats must not be allocated to the same 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.
10. Applying these principles may not result in a precise mathematical allocation of seats. In these cases, the allocations will rounded up at 0.5 and above.
11. In the event that achieving political proportionality on all committees results in an overall over-allocation of seats to a particular group, the group with the over-allocation will be asked which seat(s) they wish to relinquish. Any such seats will then be reallocated to group(s) with an overall under-allocation of seats. This process may involve some discussion between political groups.
12. Non-grouped independent members are not treated as political groups but do affect overall proportionality. As such they should be offered any seats that remain unallocated once all groups have received their full proportional allocation of seats.
13. Appendix 2 shows the numbers of committee seats allocated to political groups for the 2025/2026 council year on the basis of the methods, calculations and conventions described in paragraphs 8-11. A total of 85 committee seats are included in political balance calculations.
14. The requirements of political proportionality do not apply to the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee, but the convention is that Council will apply the same principles when appointing to this committee. For simplicity, Council has agreed that political groups will be encouraged to nominate the same members to both licensing committees.

Appointments to Council Committees

15. Appendix 3 shows the nominations to committee seats made by political groups, in accordance with the seat allocations shown in Appendix 2. Council is recommended to appoint the nominated members to committees as set out in Appendix 3.
16. There will be a standing item on Council agendas to enable political groups to propose any changes to their committee appointments, should they wish to do so.

Appeals and grievances

17. The Council's HR policies require that should an appeal be received against a decision to dismiss an employee, then a hearing should be observed by an elected member. The same applies to certain appeals within the Council's grievance procedure. A pool of members is required, and Council is recommended to agree, as in previous years, that this pool consists of all members of Council.

Appointments to Scrutiny Working Groups and Review Groups

18. The Scrutiny Committee may establish informal standing working groups or review groups (otherwise known as ‘task and finish’ groups) and appoint members to them in accordance with requirements set out within part 13 of the Council’s Constitution. Membership of these bodies are cross-party and can be drawn from all non-executive members but the principles of political proportionality, as set out within this report, do not strictly apply.

Alternative Options Considered

19. Council could not agree the political proportionality and committee nominations; however, this would be considered to not be appropriate. The political groups of the Council have been consulted on the political proportionality and the relevant allocations to each of the committees.

Financial implications

20. There are no financial issues to consider. The recommendations in this report do not have any financial impacts.

Legal issues

21. The legal issues including the Council’s duty to appoint to committees in accordance with the provisions of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 are contained within the report.

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Background Papers: None