

Annual Meeting of Council 4 May 2021 Appointments to Committees/Joint Committees/Panels and election of Chairmen and Vice-chairmen

For Decision

Portfolio Holder:	Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council
Local Councillor(s):	All
Executive Director:	Jonathan Mair, Corporate Director, Legal & Democratic

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Report Status: Public

Recommendation:

- (a) That the allocation of committee seats and the appointments to committees and joint committees, as nominated by the Political Group Leaders, be approved for 2021/22.
- (b) That delegated authority be given to Political Group Leaders to make in-year changes to committee appointments.
- (c) That the nominations for committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen for 2021/22 be approved.

Reason for Recommendation: To comply with Dorset Council's Procedural Rules (as set out in the Constitution).

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In accordance with the council's procedural rules, appointments to committees will be confirmed at the Annual Meeting of Council, which this year has been brought forward to Tuesday 4 May to enable the meeting to take place as a virtual meeting prior to the Coronavirus Regulations ending on 6 May 2021.
- 1.2 Full Council is invited to review the allocation of committee seats and make appointments to committees and joint committees for the 2021/22 municipal year in accordance with the wishes of the political groups. Full Council is also asked to delegate authority to Political Group Leaders to make in-year changes to committee appointments.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 Committee Chairmen receive a Special Responsibility Allowance in accordance with the Dorset Council Scheme of Members' Allowances.

3. Climate implications

- 3.1 No direct implications.

4. Other Implications

- 4.1 N/a

5. Risk Assessment

- 5.1 Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:
Current Risk: LOW
Residual Risk: LOW

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Allocation of committee seats

Appendix 2 – Nominations to committees

Appendix 3 – Nominations to joint panels and boards

Appendix 4 – Nominations for committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen

8. Background Papers

8.1 None

9. Political Groups and Percentage Entitlement

9.1 Where the membership of Dorset Council is divided into political groups the Council is required to review and allocate the total number of seats on ordinary committees in accordance with the political strength of each political group. Dorset Council is currently divided into 4 political groups, (Conservative, Liberal Democrat, ALL and Green), plus 1 Labour and Co-operative member. On 15 April 2021, formal notification was received from Cllr Les Fry, Leader of the ALL Group that Cllr Kate Wheller had joined the ALL Group, as a result the political proportionality of the Council has been reviewed and the ALL Group are now entitled to one additional committee seat, see allocations listed in Appendix 1.

9.2 The number of members of each political group and the percentage entitlement to the overall number of committee seats on ordinary committees is as follows:

Conservative- 43 members (52.43% entitlement)

Liberal Democrat – 29 members (35.36% entitlement)

ALL – 5 members (6.09% entitlement)

Green – 4 members (4.87% entitlement)

Cllr Paul Kimber, Labour & Co-operative (1.2% entitlement)

10. Allocation of Committee Seats and Appointments to Committees

10.1 The number of seats on ordinary committees are allocated to each political group in the same proportion as the overall strength of each political group as far as practicable. This excludes the Cabinet (appointments are made by the Leader) and any other committee where political balance is not required such as the Health and Well Being Board. In accordance with changes to Article 6 of the Constitution, approved by Full Council in February 2020, the Leader is entitled to appoint up to 6 members of the controlling group as Lead members. Lead members are not members of the Cabinet but are appointed to work alongside the Cabinet providing additional leadership capacity and support to Cabinet members. The Leader will announce the appointments of the Lead members at the Annual Meeting along with the appointments to Cabinet.

10.2 In addition, where a political group has a majority of the seats on the Council it must also have, where practicable, a majority on each individual body to which appointments are made. This means that the Conservative Group, with 52.43% of seats on the Council is entitled to a majority of

seats on all committees, where this is not possible to achieve, a pragmatic approach has been taken for example on the allocation of seats to the Strategic Planning Committee, Area Planning Committees and Licensing Committee.

- 10.3 The Local Government & Housing Act 1989 sets out 4 principles which must be followed so far as reasonably practicable:
- (a) *Preventing domination by a single group*: All the seats on a committee should not be allocated to the same political group.
 - (b) *Ensuring a majority group enjoys a majority on all committees*: If one political group has a majority in the Full Council, that political group should have a majority on each committee.
 - (c) *Aggregating all committee places and allocating fair shares*: Subject to the above two principles, the total number of seats on all the committees of the Authority allocated to each political group should be in the same proportion as that political group's seats on the Full Council.
 - (d) *Ensuring as far as practicable fairness on each committee*: Subject to the above three principles, the number of seats on each committee of the Authority allocation to each political group should be in the same proportion as that political group's seats on the Full Council.
- 10.4 Full Council may waive the political balance rules for any committee(s) where the Council wishes to appoint alternative number of members from political groups. In order for political balance to be waived no member must vote against this motion, an objective by a single member would make it necessary to apply strict proportionality. This report assumes that the Council will not want an alternative arrangement to that prescribed in the Act.
- 10.5 The allocation of committee seats, in line with the wishes of the political groups is set out in Appendix 2.

11. **Joint Arrangements**

- 11.1 The Pension Fund Committee comprises 5 members of Dorset Council (not more than 2 being also appointed to the Cabinet), 3 persons nominated by Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council and 1 person nominated by the unions.

- 11.2 The Health and Well Being Board comprises 18 persons, including 3 members of Dorset Council, all of whom shall be nominated by the Leader of Council and 1 of which may be the Leader or his nominee. The Council is asked to appoint the following members to the Health and Well-Being Board:
The Leader of Council
The Portfolio Holder for People – Adult Social Care & Health
A non-executive member to be appointed by the Leader of Council.
- 11.3 The Joint Public Health Board consists of 2 members drawn from each of the executive bodies of Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. The Leader of Council will make the appointments to the Joint Public Health Board from the membership of the Cabinet. In addition Dorset Council may also nominate one non-executive member to attend the public health board as a non-voting member.
- 11.4 The Dorchester Markets Joint Panel comprises 8 members of Dorset Council, of whom 2 should represent wards wholly or mainly within the area of the former Dorchester Borough Council (except where the appointment would result in an appointee being a member of the town council). Plus 6 members of the Dorchester Town Council.
- 11.5 The Council is asked to appoint the members to the joint committees as set out in Appendix 2.

12. Nominations to Joint Panels and Boards

- 12.1 In addition to making appointments to the council's ordinary committees there are a number of joint panels and boards to which Dorset Councillors are appointed. The seats are distributed to the political groups in accordance with the principle of political balance. The list of nominations to these panels and boards is set out at Appendix 3.

13. Appointment of Committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen

- 13.1 In accordance with committee terms of reference set out in the Constitution, the appointment of committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen will take place at the Annual Meeting of Council, unless Full Council agrees alternative arrangements.
- 13.2 The Constitution provides for the following committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen to be appointed by Full Council:

People and Health Overview Committee
People and Health Scrutiny Committee
Place and Resources Overview Committee

Place and Resources Scrutiny Committee
Audit and Governance Committee
Appeals Committee
Harbours Committee
Licensing Committee
Strategic Planning Committee
Northern Area Planning Committee
Eastern Area Planning Committee
Western and Southern Area Planning Committee
Pension Fund Committee

- 13.3 A list of nominations for committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen is set out at Appendix 4.
- 13.4 In accordance with the Constitution the Leader of Council will be the Chairman of Cabinet and the Deputy Leader will be the Vice-chairman of Cabinet.

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.