

# Annual Meeting of Council

16 May 2024

## Appointments to Committees, Election of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees

### For Decision

**Portfolio Holder:** -

**Local Councillor(s):** All

**Executive Director:** J Mair, Director of Legal & Democratic

Report Author: Susan Dallison  
Job Title: Team Leader Democratic Services  
Tel: 01305 252216  
Email: susan.dallison@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

**Report Status:** Public

### Brief Summary:

Full Council is asked to: -

Review the allocation of committee seats based on the political balance rules and the requirements of the Council's Constitution;

Make appointments to ordinary committees, joint committees, and internal panels/ boards in accordance with the nominations from the Political Group Leaders;

Elect the Chairmen and Vice-chairmen of the ordinary committees for the forthcoming municipal year.

Delegate authority to the Director of Legal & Democratic, in consultation with the relevant Political Group Leader, to make in-year changes to committee appointments as and when required.

## **Recommendation:**

1. That the allocation of committee seats in accordance with political balance rules, and the appointments to ordinary committees, joint panels, and boards, as nominated by the Political Group Leaders, be approved for 2024/25 as set out in Appendices 1, 2 & 3 respectively;
2. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Legal & Democratic, in consultation with the appropriate Political Group Leader, to make in-year changes to appointments;
3. That Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of committees be elected for the 2024/25 municipal year.

## **Reason for Recommendation:**

To comply with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Dorset Council Procedure Rules (as set out in the Constitution).

### **1. Political Groups and Percentage Entitlement**

- 1.1 Where the membership of the 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.
- 1.2 The number of members of the political groups and the overall percentage entitlement to committee seats is as follows:
  - Liberal Democrat Group – 42 members (51.22% entitlement)
  - Conservative Group – 30 members (36.59 entitlement)
  - Green Group – 4 members (4.88% entitlement)
  - Independents for Dorset Group 4 members (4.88 %entitlement)
  - Labour Group 2 members (2.43% entitlement)

### **2. Allocation of Committee Seats and Appointments to Committees**

- 2.1 The number of seats on ordinary committees (Appendix 1) are allocated to each political group in the same proportion as the overall size of each political group, as far as is practicable. This excludes appointments to the Cabinet which are made by the Leader of Council and any other panel or board where the political balance rules do not apply such as the Health and Well Being Board. In addition to appointments to the Cabinet, the Leader of Council is also entitled to appoint up to 6 members of the

controlling group as Executive Lead members and these appointments will be reported to members at the Annual Meeting.

2.2 Where a political group has a majority of seats on the council it must also have a majority on each individual body to which appointments are made.

2.3 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the 4 principles to be followed, as far as reasonably practicable, when working out political proportionality:

(a) Preventing domination by a single group: That not all the seats on a committee should 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 (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on the ordinary committees of an authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total number of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority; and

(d) Ensuring as far as practicable fairness on each committee: Subject to (a) and (c) above, the number of the committee seats which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that committee as is borne by the number of members of the group to the membership of the authority.

2.4 Full Council may waive the requirement to apply political balance rules for any committee(s) where the Full Council wishes to appoint an alternative number of members from political groups. For political balance to be waived no member must vote against the motion, an objection by a single member would make it necessary to apply strict political proportionality. This report assumes that the Council does not want an alternative arrangement to that prescribed in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

### 3. **Joint Arrangements**

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

- 3.2 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 such appointment would result in an appointee being a member of the town council). Plus 6 members of the Dorchester Town Council.
- 3.3 The Health and Wellbeing Board comprises of 18 persons, including 3 members of Dorset Council, all of whom shall be nominated by the Leader of Council, 1 of which may be the Leader or his/her nominee.
- 3.4 The Joint Public Health Board consists of 2 members drawn from each of the Cabinets of Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. The Leader of Council will make the appointments to the Public Health Board from the membership of the Cabinet. In addition, the Leader may also nominate one non-executive member to attend the public health board as a non-voting member. Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council are currently seeking to terminate the public health shared service agreement with Dorset Council, which includes the Joint Public Health Board as part of the joint arrangements, although this is not due to be completed until 1 April 2025.

#### **4. Appointment of Committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen**

- 4.1 In accordance with the Constitution, the election of committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen will take place at the Annual Meeting of Full Council, unless Full Council has agreed alternative arrangements. No councillor shall be the Chairman of more than one committee and Vice-chairman of more than one other committee except with the consent of Full Council.
- 4.2 A list of nominations for committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen will be circulated as soon as it is available or tabled at the meeting. The Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Pension Fund Committee will be appointed at the first meeting of the committee.
- 4.3 In accordance with the Constitution the Leader of Council will be the Chairman of the Cabinet and the Deputy Leader will be the Vice-chairman of Cabinet.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

Members elected to roles of special responsibility will receive an allowance in addition to the basic allowance as set out in the Scheme of Members Allowances.

6. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

There are no implications.

7. **Well-being and Health Implications**

There are no implications.

8. **Other Implications**

There are no implications.

9. **Risk Assessment**

9.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: LOW

Residual Risk: LOW

10. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

11. **Appendices – to follow as supplementary agenda items**

Appendix 1 – Allocation of committee seats

Appendix 2 – Nominations to committees 2024/25

Appendix 3 – Nominations to committees, joint committees, panels and boards 2024/25

Appendix 4 - Nominations for committee Chairmen and Vice-chairmen

12. **Background Papers**

None

13. **Report Sign Off**

13.1 This report has been through the internal report clearance process and has been signed off by the Director for Legal and Democratic (Monitoring Officer) and the Executive Director for Corporate Development (Section 151 Officer)