

Review of Political Balance and Appointment to Politically Balanced Bodies 2021 to 2022

Report number:	AGM/WS/21/001	
Report to and date(s):	Non-decision making virtual meeting of Annual Council	18 May 2021
	Annual Council	19 May 2021
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Decisions Plan: This report refers to non-executive matters and therefore is not required to be included on the Decisions Plan.

Wards impacted: None

Recommendation: It is recommended that the informal virtual non-decision making meeting of Council recommends to Annual Council approval of:

- 1. The committees and sub-committees for 2021 to 2022 in accordance with the number of seats and terms of reference, as contained in Appendix C of Report number: AGM/WS/21/001 (to follow)**
- 2. The political balance and allocation of seats on committees as contained in Appendix A**

of Report number: AGM/WS/21/001 (to follow)

- 3. The political balance and allocation of substitutes on Committees as per Appendix B of Report number: AGM/WS/21/001 (to follow)**
- 4. That, based on the agreed allocations, Group Leaders have up to 14 days in which to notify the Monitoring Officer of their nominations to committee places, on which the Monitoring Officer will appoint members and substitute members to committees and sub-committees.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 The law requires that at each annual meeting of Council, the Council reviews its appointment of committees and allocation of councillors to each committee. The allocation of councillors has to respect the requirement to ensure that relevant committees are politically balanced, in that they reflect the number of councillors who belong to each political group within the Council.
- 1.2 Once Council has allocated seats on the committees, the Group Leaders then nominate which members from their group will be appointed to the seat and notify the Monitoring Officer.
- 1.3 Councillors who are not members of a political group can be allocated seats by the Council and they can then agree between them who will take the seats, or the Council may be required to vote on which non-grouped councillor is appointed to each committee.
- 1.4 The rules on allocating seats are as follows:

That, as far as possible:

- a. Not all seats on committees are allocated to the same group
- b. The majority group is entitled to have the majority of seats on each committee
- c. The number of seats on the ordinary committees for each group is proportionate to their overall membership on the Council
- d. The number of seats on all committees for each group is proportionate to their overall membership on the Council

For reference, ordinary committees are committees that make decisions, such as the Development Control Committee.

- 1.5 In practice, it is very difficult to create a perfect allocation of seats, and therefore some adjustments may need to create an equitable allocation between political groups. This can include adjusting the number of councillors that sit on each committee.

2. Proposals within this report

- 2.1 This report has been produced prior to the outcome of the announcement of the results of the six West Suffolk Council by-elections held on 6 May 2021.
- 2.2 Following the election result, the Monitoring Officer will recalculate the political balance and confirm proposals to Group Leaders. Subject to their considerations, the Monitoring Officer will then publish the

proposed committee size and terms of reference (Appendix A);
allocation of seats to committees (Appendix B) and allocation of
substitutes to committees (Appendix C)

3. Alternative options that have been considered

3.1 None

4. Consultation and engagement undertaken

4.1 None

5. Risks associated with the proposals

5.1 None

6. Implications arising from the proposals

6.1 None

7. Appendices referenced in this report

7.1 Appendix A: Terms of Reference for Committees

7.2 Appendix B: Allocation of seats to Committees

7.3 Appendix C: Allocation of substitutes to Committees

8. Background documents associated with this report

8.1 None