



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Council

Thursday, 27 February 2025

Report of Karen Bradford, Chief Executive

Political Proportionality and Allocation of Seats on Committees

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

Full Council is invited to note a change in the authority's political proportionality and consider appointments to seats on committees.

Recommendations

Full Council is recommended to:

- 1. Note the changes in political proportionality and the allocation of seats on committees to each of the Council's political groups**
- 2. Approve appointments to committee seats as proposed by respective political group leaders**

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?

No

What are the relevant corporate priorities?

Effective council

Which wards are impacted?

(All Wards)

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no significant financial or procurement implications arising from this report.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 All Members of the Council must complete mandatory training on the Councillor Code of Conduct, Equalities, Inclusion & Diversity, PREVENT and Safeguarding within six months of the Council's Annual Meeting or the date of their election to the Council, whichever is the latter. Any Member who fails to adhere to this requirement is not permitted to act as a Member of any of the Council's committees, until they have completed the training.
- 1.3 In addition, Members of the Governance and Audit Committee, Licensing Committee, Planning Committee and Standards Committee are required to attend mandatory training on the specific Committee before being able to sit as a Member of that Committee.
- 1.4 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the legislative requirements for the Council in reviewing representation of different political groups and determining the allocation of seats on committees.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. Councillor Rhys Baker has provided the necessary notice that he is no longer a member of the Green Party Group and is now an Independent (Unaligned) Councillor.
- 2.2. This has resulted in a slight impact on the allocation of committee seats to the Democratic Independent Group, Grantham Independent Group, the Independent Group, the Green Party Group and the Labour and Co-operative Group.

- 2.3 A revised calculation of the Council's political proportionality and allocation of committee seats is outlined at **Appendix A**, which takes into account these changes.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The change in political proportionality has had the following impact on committee seat allocations:
- Licensing Committee and Alcohol, Entertainment and Late Night Refreshment Licensing Committee – the Green Party Group lose one seat and the Democratic Independent Group gain one seat
 - Standards Committee – the Green Party Group lose one seat and the Grantham Independent Group gain one seat
 - All other Committees (with the exception of the Chief Executive's Appeals Panel) – the Green Party Group and Labour and Co-operative Party share equal entitlement to one seat on each Committee. Previously, the Green Party Group was entitled to one seat on each Committee
- 3.2. The Democratic Independent Group Leader, Councillor Philip Knowles, has nominated himself for appointment on the Licensing Committee and Alcohol, Entertainment and Late Night Refreshment Licensing Committee.
- 3.3. The Independent Group, who had previously gifted its seat to Councillor Philip Knowles on the Licensing Committee and Alcohol, Entertainment and Late Night Refreshment Licensing Committee, has gifted its seat to Councillor Patsy Ellis. This retains Councillor Ellis' membership on these Committees who was previously gifted the seat by the Green Party Group.
- 3.4. The Grantham Independent Group Leader, Councillor Tim Harrison, has nominated himself for appointment on the Standards Committee.
- 3.5. The Green Party Group Leader and Labour and Co-operative Group Leader have agreed their respective allocations and confirmed the following:
- Planning Committee – Green Party Group to be allocated the seat and Councillor Vanessa Smith to continue as a member of the Committee
 - Governance and Audit Committee – Labour and Co-operative Group to be allocated the seat and Councillor Rob Shorrocks to continue as a member of the Committee
 - Employment Committee – Labour and Co-operative Group to be allocated the seat, which is to be gifted to Councillor Rhys Baker

- Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Labour and Co-operative Group to be allocated the seat and Councillor Lee Steptoe to continue as a member of the Committee
- Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Labour and Co-operative Group to be allocated the seat and Councillor Lee Steptoe to continue as a member of the Committee. Councillor Emma Baker to also continue as a member of the Committee, the seat for which is gifted from the Grantham Independent Group
- Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Green Party Group to be allocated the seat and Councillor Vanessa Smith to continue as a member of the Committee
- Culture and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Green Party Group to be allocated the seat and Councillor Emma Baker to continue as member of the Committee
- Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Green Party Group to be allocated the seat and Councillor Emma Baker to continue as member of the Committee

3.6. The Liberal Democrat Group Leader has nominated Councillor Rhea Rayside as a member of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in place of himself.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. Political Group Leaders are invited to propose any further amendments or nominations to committees from their respective political groups.
- 4.2. Section 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 allows for an alternative approach to the requirement for political proportionality, which currently does not include those Councillors not in political groups (non-aligned) in the calculation for the allocation of committee seats. Such an arrangement can only be put in place if no Member votes against it.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. To ensure that the Council has sufficient representation on committees which aligns with the authority's political proportionality.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix A – Political proportionality and allocation of seats to Committees.