



Appointments to Committees and Panels of the Council and appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

This report sets out the requirements placed on Full Council for the appointment of Members to its Committees and Panels, and the appointment of their Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen.

All Political Group Leaders are responsible for nominating Members from within their respective Groups to each of the Committees/Panels, in accordance with the political proportionality of the Authority as appropriate. Full Council will appoint the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees.

Recommendations

Full Council is asked to:

- 1. Note the changes in political proportionality of the Council and the consequent allocation of seats on committees (Appendix A).**
- 2. Appoint Members to its Committees and Panels, in accordance with political balance.**
- 3. Appoint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees.**
- 4. Request each Group Leader appoint a representative to the UKPSF Board.**

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Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?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 Provision for the Special Responsibility Allowances payable in respect of appointments within this report is made within the Members' Allowances budget which was approved by Council on 27 February 2025.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 Appointments to the Council's Committees and Panels must comply with the relevant legislation, as set out in this report, and provisions within the Council's Constitution.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 introduced statutory requirements that, where a relevant authority has a membership divided into different political groups, it must ensure that appointments reflect the political balance of the Council as a whole.
- 2.2. At the annual meeting of Full Council, Members must decide the allocation of seats to political groups, in accordance with the Regulations.
- 2.3. Those appointments to which the rules of political balance apply are:
- Ordinary Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council.
 - Advisory Committees and any Sub-Committees appointed by an Advisory Committee.
 - Specified prescribed bodies where at least three seats have to be filled by the relevant Authority

- 2.4 The legislation also requires that in appointing members on a politically proportional basis, it should give effect, so far as reasonably practicable, to the following principles:
- a) That not all seats are appointed to the same political groups.
 - b) That a political group with an overall Council majority gets a majority of seats allocated.
 - c) Subject to a) and b) that the total number of seats each political group has on all ordinary Committees is in proportion to that group's share of seats on the whole Council.
 - d) Subject to a) and c) that each political group has the same proportion of seats as it holds on the Council as a whole.
- 2.5 The Regulations mean that Members who are not aligned to a political group are not considered as part of the calculation. They do not have a right to be appointed to any Council Committee or Panel.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. When making appointments, the following factors must be taken into consideration:
- In order to demonstrate a robust and effective scrutiny process, no member of Cabinet may sit on an Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 - Membership of the Chief Executive's Appeal Panel must include at least one member of Cabinet.
 - Members of the Chief Executive's Appeal Panel should not be Members of the Employment Committee. This is to ensure that any appeal lodged is considered by Members who have not previously been involved with any matters being challenged.
- 3.2 Political groups can 'gift' any of their allocated seats to another political group, or to a designated individual Member of the Council.
- 3.3 On 8 May 2025 notice was received that the South Kesteven Coalition Group had ceased to exist. Three of its members formed a new group – 'South Kesteven Independent Group' - with Councillor Paul Wood as Leader and Councillor Penny Milnes as Deputy Leader. The remaining 22 members formed a new group, the 'Conservative Group', with Councillor Nikki Manterfield as Leader, and Councillor Sarah Trotter as Deputy Leader.
- 3.4 On 19 May 2025 Councillor Rhea Rayside gave notice that she had left the Liberal Democrat Group and wished to sit as an 'Independent – unaligned' member. On 21 May 2025 Councillor Rhea Rayside gave further notice that she had joined the Democratic Independent Group, making them a group of 9 members and the second largest group on the Council.

- 3.5 The political balance equation used by the Council in recent years (whereby seats are allocated purely on the percentage each group holds on the Council) would have resulted in the two smallest groups on the Council (Labour and Co-operative Group and the Green Group) having no entitlement to any seats (with the exception of Planning Committee). This is because the method rounds political balance figures up or down, which is to the detriment of the smallest groups when there are eight groups on the Council.
- 3.6 Under a political balance calculation across all seats on ordinary committees, groups are allocated a proportion of committee seats which closely matches their percentage of seats on Full Council.
- 3.7 Licensing Committee is not strictly an ordinary committee and therefore is not considered within these calculations. However, as a committee of 11 seats it loosely follows the same principles.
- 3.8 Each political Group leader is required to appoint a representative to the UKPSF Board. These appointments would sit alongside the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and the Chairman of Finance & Economic and Rural & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

4. Appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen

- 4.1 The Council's Constitution prescribes that Full Council will appoint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees according to their suitability and merit in the opinion of the Leader of the Council.
- 4.2 The appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the UKSPF Board is carried out at the Board's first meeting of the year and therefore Full Council does not need to make these appointments.

5. Special Responsibility Allowances

- 5.1 Special Responsibility Allowances will apply to specific roles, such as Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees, in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme.

6. Other Options Considered

- 6.1 One of the roles of the Council at its annual meeting is to determine which committees to establish for the municipal year, together with their size and terms of reference. Full Council could therefore opt to make changes to its committee structure at this meeting.

7. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 7.1. Full Council must make appointments as prescribed by legislation and the Council's Constitution. The report facilitates this requirement.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The latest political balance calculation for the Council has been shared with Political Group Leaders in advance of the publication of this report.

9. Background Papers

- 9.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/42/contents>
- 9.2 Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1990/1553/contents/made>

10. Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix A – political balance.