

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 19 OCTOBER 2016

REPORT BY ACTING HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

REVIEW OF THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All

Purpose/Summary of Report

- **To review the Council's allocation of seats on committees following the Puckeridge by-election.**

RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION: That:

(A)	the allocation of the number of seats on committees be as set out in Table Two below.
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1.0 Background

1.1 Council, at its Annual meeting in May 2016, approved the decision-making arrangements for the discharge of functions for the 2016/17 Civic Year.

1.2 Following the Puckeridge by-election, Councillor P Boylan has given notice that he has joined the Conservative Group, meaning that the Authority needs to review the allocation of seats on its committees.

2.0 Committees of the Council

2.1 The following committees were constituted by Council in May 2016, comprising the following number of Members:

TABLE ONE	
Committee	Number of seats
Community Scrutiny	10
Corporate Business Scrutiny	10
Environment Scrutiny	10
Health and Wellbeing	10
Audit and Governance	10
Development Management	12
Human Resources	7
Licensing	12
Chief Officer Recruitment	5
East Herts Council and Stevenage Borough Council Joint Revenues and Benefits Committee (3 from East Herts and 3 from Stevenage)	3
TOTAL	89

- 2.2 Currently, there are two vacancies on committees arising from the resignation of Councillor Cartwright, an Independent Member, on Environment Scrutiny and Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny.
- 3.0 Political Groups
- 3.1 Where Members of the Council are divided into political groups, the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 place a duty on the Council to review the allocation between those groups of seats on its Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Committees according to certain principles. The aim is to ensure that the political composition of the Committees, etc, reflects the composition of the Council. The rules of proportionality do not apply to the Executive.
- 3.2 Following the Puckeridge by-election, the one political group constituted within East Herts Council, the Conservative Group, now comprises 49 Members (up from 48). This group is entitled to a proportion of seats in relation to its relative percentage size, i.e. 98%. It is for Council to appoint Members to the seats in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom they have been allocated.
- 3.3 Council is invited to approve the allocation of seats on committees

as set out below:

TABLE TWO			
<u>Committees</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Cons</u>	<u>Ind - PP</u>
Environment	10	10	0
Community	10	9	1
Corporate Business	10	9	1
Health and Wellbeing	10	10	0
Audit and Governance	10	10	0
Development Management	12	12	0
Licensing	12	12	0
Human Resources	7	7	0
Chief Officer Recruitment	5	5	0
Revenues and Benefits	3	3	0
Total	89	85	2
		(97.75%)	(2.25%)

3.4 The Leader of the Conservative Group has advised of the Group's wishes for Councillor P Boylan to be appointed to fill the vacant seats on Environment Scrutiny and Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committees. Subject to Council approving the recommendation above, these appointments will be made by the Acting Head of Legal and Democratic Services under delegated powers.

4.0 Implications/Consultations

4.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

None

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