

East Herts Council Report

Council

Date of meeting: 29 April 2021

Report by: Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Report title: Committee Membership and Political Balance of the Council 2021/22

Ward(s) affected: All Wards

- Council, at its annual meeting, is required to approve the decision-making arrangements for the discharge of functions.

RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (A) the following Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Committee be appointed, with the number of voting Members stated:**

<u>Committee</u>	<u>No. of Members</u>
Overview and Scrutiny	14
Audit and Governance	7
Development Management	12
Human Resources	7
Licensing	12
Financial Sustainability	10

Chief Officer Recruitment 5

East Herts Council and Stevenage Borough Council Joint Revenues and Benefits Committee (3 from East Herts) 6

Joint CCTV Executive (3 from East Herts) 12

- (B) the membership and Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees, joint Committees be as set out in Appendix A, with Members being appointed in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom the seats on these bodies have been allocated,**
- (C) the Members to the Executive (in addition to the Leader) with the portfolio responsibilities as detailed in Appendix B, be noted;**
- (D) the programme of Council meetings, as detailed at paragraph 5.1 of the report submitted, be approved; and**
- (E) the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make changes in the standing membership of committees, joint committees and panel in (A) above, in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom seats on these bodies have been allocated**

1.0 The Executive/Leader of the Council

- 1.1 Under its constitution, in May 2019, Council appointed the Leader of the Council for the “life” of the Council (i.e. until the next District Council elections in 2023). The constitution sets out the circumstances when this post becomes vacant.
- 1.2 In terms of the appointment of Members to the Executive, the

constitution provides that this is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council once appointed. The Leader determines the size of the Executive and she has advised that the size of the Executive proposed for 2021/22 will remain unchanged at seven members (plus the Leader).

- 1.3 The Leader is also responsible for advising Council on the allocation of executive portfolio responsibilities. These are set out at Appendix B.

2.0 Scrutiny Committees and Regulatory Committees

- 2.1 It is proposed that the following Committees will be established with the same of terms of reference as last year.

Overview and Scrutiny (14 members)

Audit and Governance (7 members)

Development Management Committee (12 Members)

Human Resources Committee (7 Members)

Licensing Committee (12 Members)

Financial Sustainability (10 Members)

Chief Officer Recruitment Committee (5 Members)

- 2.3 Sub-Committees and panels with specific responsibilities relating to licensing and standards matters will be reconstituted by the Licensing and Performance, Audit and Governance Committees respectively (as the 'parent' committees) at their first meetings in the Civic Year immediately after Annual Council.

3.0 Joint Committees

- 3.1 It is proposed that the joint committees relating to Revenues and Benefits (with Stevenage) and CCTV (with Hertsmere, Stevenage, North Herts) be retained on their existing basis.

4.0 Political Groups

- 4.1 Where Members of a Council are divided into political groups, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 places 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 the political composition of those committees reflects the political representation of the Council. The rules of proportionality do not apply to the Executive.
- 4.2 The political groups within East Herts Council will be entitled to an allocation of committee places in proportion to their representation on the Council. The political balance percentage of representation of each relevant group currently remains unchanged from 2020/21 but this could change after the Bishop Stortford All Saints by-election on 6 May 2021 as there is currently a vacancy on the Council. Council will be notified of any amendment to its political balance.
- 4.3 The Council must appoint Members to places on committees in accordance with each group's entitlement. Appendix A sets out the proposed membership.
- 4.4 Members of the Executive may not be appointed to serve on scrutiny committees.

5.0 Calendar of Meetings

- 5.1 A Calendar of meetings for 2021/22 has already been published on the [council's website](#) and Council is invited to confirm the dates of its meetings as follows:

28 July 2021

20 October 2021

15 December 2021

1 March 2022

11 May 2022 (Annual)

6.0 Outside Bodies

6.1 Council appoints a significant number of Members as its representatives on outside bodies. The appointment of such representatives is delegated to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

6.2 A separate report on this agenda reviews the work undertaken by outside bodies in 2021/22.

7.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

No

Specific Wards

No

Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: James Ellis, Head of Legal and Democratic Services
james.ellis@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Katie Mogan, Democratic Services Manager
katie.mogan@eastherts.gov.uk