

East Herts Council Report

Council

Date of meeting: 17 May 2023

Report by: Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Report title: Political Balance and Committee Membership of the Council 2023/24

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

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

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:

- a) That the Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Committees with the number of voting Members listed in paragraph 2.1 be appointed;**
- b) That the political balance of the Council at Appendix A be agreed**
- c) That the membership and Chairman of Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Committees be as set out in Appendix B, with Members being appointed in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom the seats on these bodies have been allocated;**
- d) That the intention of the Leader of the Council to appoint Members to the Executive (in addition to the Leader) with**

the portfolio responsibilities as detailed in Appendix C be noted;

- e) That the programme of Council meetings, as detailed at paragraph 4.1, be approved;**
- f) That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make changes in the standing membership of committees, joint committees and panels in (A) above, in accordance with the wishes of the political group to whom seats on these bodies have been allocated;**
- g) That the action to be taken by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader, under delegated authority, concerning the appointment of representatives to outside bodies, be noted; and**
- h) The Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make such amendments to the Council's Constitution as may be necessary to account for the decisions in (A) to (G) above.**

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 Under its Constitution, Council appoints the Leader of the Council and this appointment is for the 'life' of the Council (i.e until the next District Council elections in 2027). Paragraph 4.3.1 of the Constitution sets out the circumstances when this post becomes vacant.

- 1.2 The Leader of the Council will be appointed under Item 5 on the Council agenda.
- 1.3 In terms of the appointment of Members to the Executive, the Constitution provides that it is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council once appointed. The Leader determines the size of the Executive. The Leader's determination on the size of the Executive for 2023/24 is at Appendix C (to follow).
- 1.4 The Leader is also responsible for advising Council on the allocation of executive portfolio responsibilities. The Executive portfolio responsibilities are also set out in Appendix C (to follow).

2.0 Committees

- 2.1 Council are asked to appoint the following Committees and size:

Committee	No. of Members
Overview and Scrutiny	14
Audit and Governance	7
Development Management	12
Human Resources	7
Licensing	12
Standards	7
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
East Herts Council and Stevenage	6

Borough Council Joint Information Technology Committee (3 from East Herts)	
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3.0 Political Groups

- 3.1 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. This is to ensure that the political composition of those committees reflects the political representation of the Council. The rules of proportionality do not apply to the Executive.
- 3.2 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 representation of each relevant group is set out in Appendix A.
- 3.3 The Council must appoint Members to places on committees in accordance with each group's entitlement. Appendix B (to follow) sets out the proposed membership.

4.0 Calendar of meetings

- 4.1 A Calendar of meetings for 2023/24 has already been published on the council's website and Council is invited to confirm the dates of its meetings as follows:

26 July 2023

18 October 2023

13 December 2023

28 February 2024

15 May 2024

5.0 Outside Bodies

5.1 Council appoints a significant number of Members to be representatives on a range of 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.

6.0 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

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 None

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