

East Herts Council Report

Council

Date of meeting: 13 May 2026

Report by: Jonathan Geall, Director for Communities and Monitoring Officer

Report title: Political Balance and Committee Membership of the Council 2026/277

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 Monitoring Officer 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 Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Leader, under delegated authority, concerning the appointment of representatives to outside bodies, be noted; and
- h) The Monitoring Officer 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 In terms of the appointment of Members to the Executive, the Constitution provides that it is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council and the Leader determines the size of the Executive. The Leader's determination on the size of the Executive for 2026/27 is at Appendix C and remains unchanged from 2025/26.
- 1.2 The Leader is also responsible for advising Council on the allocation of executive portfolio responsibilities. The Executive portfolio responsibilities are set out in Appendix C. Responsibility for Communications has moved from the Executive Member for Corporate Services to the Executive Member for Resident Engagement, as reported to Council earlier on this agenda.

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
Local Joint Panel	4
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 Borough Council Joint Information Technology Committee (3 from East Herts)	6
Harlow and Gilston Garden Town Joint Committee (1 from East Herts)	5

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 (*to follow*).

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 2026/27 has already been published on the council's website and Council is invited to confirm the dates of its meetings as follows:

10 June 2026

22 July 2026

14 October 2026

9 December 2026

3 March 2027

19 May 2027

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 Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

5.2 The annual reports from Members appointed to these outside bodies follow later in the agenda.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

None arising directly from this report.

Data Protection

None arising directly from this report.

Equalities

None arising directly from this report.

Environmental Sustainability

None arising directly from this report.

Financial

None arising directly from this report.

Health and Safety

None arising directly from this report.

Human Resources

None arising directly from this report.

Human Rights

None arising directly from this report.

Legal

This report fulfils the annual requirement as set out in the constitution.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 None

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