

Report to: **Governance Committee**

Date: **16 April 2024**

By: **Assistant Chief Executive**

Title of report: **Appointments of Members to Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels and Other Bodies**

Purpose of report: **To consider the allocation of places on committees, sub-committees, panels and other bodies to the four party political groups, the Independent Democrat Group and independent members.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Governance Committee is recommended to recommend the County Council to:

1) Allocate to political and independent groups the places on, and membership of:

- (a) The main committees in appendix 1 of this report;**
 - (b) other committees and panels listed in Appendix 2 of this report; and**
 - (c) Chair and Vice Chair positions on Scrutiny Committees and other Committees.**
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1. Supporting Information

1.1 In appointing members to committees, sub-committees, most panels and some outside bodies, the Council must comply with section 15 of the Local Government Act 1989 and subsequent Regulations. These provide that places on committees must be allocated to political groups in proportion to the number of seats on the Council held by each group, unless there is agreement, without dissent, that the provisions of the Act should not be applied.

1.2 The allocation of places to party groups must, so far as is reasonably practicable, give effect to the following principles:

- (a) not all the seats on the body can be allocated to the same political group;
- (b) where more than half the members of the Council belong to one political group, that group shall have a majority on all committees, sub-committees, etc;
- (c) subject to (a) and (b) above, the total number of seats on the ordinary committees (including sub-committees) allocated to a political group reflects that group's proportion of the members of the Council;
- (d) subject to (a), (b) and (c) above, the number of seats on each body allocated to a political group reflects the proportion of the seats on the Council held by the group.

1.3 The rules require seats to be allocated on a proportional basis "so far as practicable" and inevitably there must be some rounding up and rounding down. It is open to the Council to review the size and number of committees and sub-committees at any time.

1.4 Members of the Cabinet may not serve on the Scrutiny Committees, or the Regulatory Committee and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council may not serve on the Standards Committee.

1.5 The Leader of the Council appoints the Cabinet and allocates portfolios to those Cabinet Members. Political balance provisions do not apply to the Cabinet.

1.6 The principle in paragraph 1.2 (c) above applies to appointments to ordinary committees (including sub-committees). Accordingly, before considering the allocation of places to political groups the Committee will need to consider whether it wishes to recommend any changes in committees, including their size.

1.7 Following the Committee's meeting, the party group leaders and independent members will be asked to let the Assistant Chief Executive have nominations to fill the places on committees, sub-committees, panels and other bodies covered in this report provisionally allocated to their group. The nominations received will be circulated to members of the County Council on the day of the annual council meeting, for approval by the Council.

2. Allocation of seats

2.1 The tables in Appendix 1 show the revised allocation of seats for 2023/24 following the by-elections in July and August 2023. The tables in Appendix 1 show the proposed allocation of seats for 2024/25. There are no changes to the allocation agreed in September 2023 for 2023/24. The proposals in relation to the ordinary committees and sub-committees, their total membership and the number of seats on each to which the groups will be entitled follows the principles set out in paragraph 1.2 above.

2.2 The allocation of seats to the Governance Committee has been proposed to take into account the importance of having one member from each of the four largest political groups. Membership of this Committee normally includes the Group Leaders.

2.3 The Committee is asked to consider the allocations in Appendix 1 and to make a recommendation to the County Council as to number of places on each committee to be allocated to each group or independent members.

3. Other Committees and Panels

3.1 There is no obligation in relation to other committees and panels to aggregate the total number of places and to adjust allocations so that the total number of places allocated to each group reflects its proportion of the members of the Council. It is proposed that places should be allocated on a proportionate basis, unless the Council agrees to waive the political balance provisions which has been the custom for certain panels over many years.

3.2 The Committee is asked to recommend to County Council the number of places on the Committees and Panels listed in Appendix 2.

4. Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Committees

4.1 The Council's Constitution provides that the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Committees and Audit Committee should be added together and the positions then allocated to groups in accordance to the number of seats they have on the Council. Within this allocation the Chair of the Audit Committee shall be appointed from the members of the largest Group not represented on the Cabinet. On this basis the allocation of the 8 places would be as follows:

Conservative – 4

Liberal Democrat – 2

Labour – 1

Green - 1

Independent Democrat - 0

The proposed list of Chairs and Vice Chairs (there are no changes to the allocation agreed in September 2023) to be appointed by the County Council is:

Committee	Chair	Vice-Chair
Regulatory	Conservative	
People Scrutiny Committee	Conservative	Liberal Democrat
Place Scrutiny Committee	Conservative	Green
Audit Committee	Liberal Democrat	Conservative
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Conservative	Labour
Governance Committee	Conservative	
Planning Committee	Conservative	Conservative
Pension Committee	Conservative	
Standards Committee	Conservative	

5. Conclusion

5.1 The Committee is asked to recommend the County Council to agree the allocation of places on committees to each group as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 and the Chair and Vice Chair positions on committees.

PHILIP BAKER
Assistant Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Georgina Seligmann
 Tel: 01273 482355
 E-mail: Georgina.seligmann@[eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:Georgina.seligmann@eastsussex.gov.uk)

Local Member: All

Background Documents: None

Appendix 1

Group	Number of Councillors	%	Number of Seats
Conservative	25	50	40
Liberal Democrat	12	24	19
Labour	5	10	8
Green	5	10	8
Independent Democrat	2	4	3
Independent	1	2	1
Total	50	100	79

Committee	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Green	Independent Democrat	Independent
Regulatory Committee (18)	9	4	2	2	1	0
Planning (7)	4	2	1	0	0	0
Governance Committee (6)	3	1	1	1	0	0
Standards Committee (7)	4	1	1	1	0	0
Pension Committee (5)	3	1	0	1	0	0
Audit (7)	4	2	0	1	0	0
Place (11)	5	3	1	1	1	0
People (11)	4	3	1	1	1	1
HOSC (7)	4	2	1	0	0	0
Totals (79)	40	19	8	8	3	1

Appendix 2

This allocation relates to the following Committees and Panels and the current allocation is set out below:

Committee size	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Green	Independent Democrat	Independent
5	2.50	1.20	0.50	0.50	0.20	0.10
7	3.50	1.68	0.70	0.70	0.29	0.14

(a) County Joint Consultative Committee (5 members of the County Council).

Conservative: Cllr Glazier
Conservative: Cllr Bennett
Conservative: Cllr Standley
Lib Dem: Cllr Tutt
Labour: Cllr Webb

(b) County Consultative Committee Governors (5 Members of the County Council, one of whom should be the Lead Cabinet Member Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability who chairs the Committee).

Conservative: Cllr Standley
Conservative: Cllr Galley
Conservative: Cllr Belsey
Lib Dem: Cllr Shuttleworth
Labour: Cllr Scott

(c) Joint Advisory Committee (Schools) (5 Members of the County Council of whom one should be the Lead Cabinet Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability, and another should be a member of the Cabinet).

Conservative: Cllr Standley
Conservative: Cllr Bennett
Conservative: Cllr Bowdler
Lib Dem: Cllr Shuttleworth
Labour: Cllr Collier

(d) Corporate Parenting Panel (7 Members of the County Council).

Conservative: Cllr Bowdler
Conservative: Cllr di Cara
Conservative: Cllr Marlow-Eastwood
Conservative: Cllr Milligan
Lib Dem: Cllr Field
Lib Dem: Cllr Swansborough
Green: Cllr Cross

(e) Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (5 members of the County Council).

Conservative: Cllr Galley
Conservative: Cllr Belsey
Conservative: Cllr Azad
Lib Dem: Cllr Murphy
Labour: Cllr Webb

(f) Transport and Student Support Panel (3 Members of the County Council). The County Council has a custom of agreeing to waive the political balance provisions in relation to this Panel.

Conservative: Cllr Redstone

Lib Dem: Cllr Field

Green: Cllr Cross