

HAMBLETON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report To: Council
10 December 2013

From: Chief Executive

Subject: ALLOCATION OF SEATS AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES

All Wards
Scrutiny Committees

1.0 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider necessary amendments to the allocation of seats on Committees because of recent changes in the political groups on the Council and a specific request from the Conservative Group in respect of the Planning Committee.
- 1.2 The Council currently has 43 Members, with one seat vacant. Councillor Billings has recently moved from the Conservative Group to the Independent Group. This has had an effect on the political proportionality of the Council and requires consideration of changes to the allocation of seats on Committees.
- 1.3 The Conservative Group has requested a change to its allocation on the Planning Committee.

2.0 ALLOCATION OF SEATS:

- 2.1 Committees must be constituted on the basis of available seats being allocated on the Council's overall political proportionality (so far as is "reasonably practicable") unless some other basis of allocation has been approved without any Member voting against it.
- 2.2 The allocation of seats is a two-stage process:-
 - 2.2.1 Council determines seat allocations to each Group based on proportionality;
 - 2.2.2 Council decides which Members sit on which Committees. In carrying out this process the Council must follow the wishes expressed by Groups.
- 2.3 Proportionality does not apply to Cabinet. Proportionality is currently waived for the Licensing Hearings Panel and the Standards Hearings Panel.
- 2.4 Currently the remaining seats on the Council are allocated on the following basis:-

Conservatives	62
Liberal Democrats	3
Independents	5

This is represented in Annex 'A'.

2.5 However, following the changes referred to at paragraph 1.2 above, the seat allocation should be:-

Conservatives	60
Liberal Democrats	4
Independents	6

In order to convert this to Committee places it is recommended that the allocations in Annex 'B' be adopted. In effect this gives two seats on the Licensing and Environmental Protection Committee to the two non-Conservative groups.

2.6 If adopted this would require one of the current Independent Group Members (Councillor D Smith or Councillor K Billings) to be removed from Scrutiny Committee 1 and replaced with a Conservative Group nominee. Two Conservative Group Members would have to be removed from the Licensing and Environmental Protection Committee and one nominee each from the Independent Group and Liberal Democrat Group be appointed to that Committee.

2.7 The Group Leaders have been consulted on the proposals in paragraph 2.6 and have agreed the following:-

- Councillor D H Smith be removed from Scrutiny Committee 1. Councillor Noone be appointed to Scrutiny Committee 1 and the remaining seat remain vacant.
- Councillors Les and Dickins be removed from the Licensing and Environmental Protection Committee and Councillors Billings and B Griffiths be appointed to that Committee.

2.8 The Conservative Group has requested that Councillor Mrs Sanderson be replaced by Councillor Dickins on the Planning Committee.

3.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

3.1 The Council is obliged to comply with rules on proportionality and the wishes of Groups in allocating seats on Committees.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

4.1 None.

5.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 None.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

6.1 It is recommended:-

- (1) that proportionality rules continue to be waived in respect of the Licensing Hearings Panel and the Standards Hearings Panel;

- (2) that the allocations for political groups for the remaining Committees be as set out in Annex 'B';
- (3) that the changes of membership of Committees set out in paragraphs 2.7 and 2.8 of the report be approved.

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Background papers: None

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ANNEX 'A'

Committee	Conservative	Independent	Liberal Democrat	TOTAL
Scrutiny Committee 1	13	1	1	15
Scrutiny Committee 2	12	1	1	14
Planning Committee	14	1	1	16
Licensing and Environmental Protection Committee	10	0	0	10
Appeals Committee	7	1	0	8
Audit, Governance and Standards Committee	6	1	0	7
	62	5	3	70

ANNEX 'B'

Committee	Conservative	Independent	Liberal Democrat	TOTAL
Scrutiny Committee 1	13	1	1	15
Scrutiny Committee 2	12	1	1	14
Planning Committee	14	1	1	16
Licensing and Environmental Protection Committee	8	1	1	10
Appeals Committee	7	1	0	8
Audit, Governance and Standards Committee	6	1	0	7
	60	6	4	70