



ANNUAL COUNCIL

22 MAY 2024

SUBJECT:	APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES 2024/25
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to determine such committees as it considers appropriate for the municipal year and, having done so, determine the number of members to form the committees, the allocation of political balance to those committees that are not exempted from the requirements and to appoint Members to those committees.

With regard to panels and statutory / advisory committees, which fall under the remit of some of these committees, the Council is requested to delegate their appointment to the relevant committees, as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Council is recommended to:

- (1) Agree to the formation of those Committees set out in Part 3(B) of the Constitution and allocate seats on the Committees as set out in Appendix 1.
- (2) Authorise the Monitoring Officer as proper officer to carry out the wishes of the Leaders of Political Groups in allocating Members to membership and substitute membership of the committees, and to appoint those Members with effect from the date at which the proper officer is advised of the names of such Members.
- (3) Delegate the appointment of sub-committees, panels and statutory/advisory committees to the appropriate parent Committee of Council.
- (4) Delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer, to appoint Members to the Regulatory Panel of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee and appoint Members to the Licensing Panel of the Licensing Committee, in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of these Committees, to enable meetings of either, or both, of these panels, if required, prior to their appointment at the first meetings of each of these committees.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The Annual Meeting of the Council is required to make appointments to Committees of the Council.
- 1.2 It may be necessary for either, or both, the Regulatory Panel of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee and the Licensing Panel of the Licensing Committee, to meet in advance of either of these panels being appointed by its parent committee at the first meetings of each committee, on 7 June 2024.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Options for appointments and the numbers of committee places have been discussed by the Political Group Leaders.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Committees

- 3.1.1 The Constitution contains a number of ordinary and statutory committees. These are identified in the Summary (Part 1), Articles (Part 2) and set out in detail with Terms of Reference at Part 3B.
- 3.1.2 The Constitution states that the number of Members to be appointed to each of these committees is to be determined by Council.
- 3.1.3 In March 2024, Council resolved to agree that the overall number of seats be reduced from 114 to 113, further to a report on the revision of the appointments to Committees.

3.2 Proportionality

- 3.2.1 The Council must comply with the requirements of sections 15 to 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (LGHA), and the relevant regulations concerning political balance on committees and sub-committees.

The political composition of the 66 Members of Council is now as follows:

Labour 29 (43.94%)
Conservative 17 (25.76%)
Green 14 (21.21%)
Liberal Democrat 6 (9.09%)

- 3.2.2 The determination of political balance must, so far as reasonably practicable, give effect to the principles:

- (a) that not all the seats on the body to which appointments are made are allocated to the same political group;
- (b) that the majority of seats on the body is allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
- (c) subject to (a) and (b), that the total number of seats on all the ordinary committees of a relevant authority allocated to a particular political group reflects that group's proportion of the membership of the authority; and
- (d) subject to (a) and (c), that the number of seats on each body allocated to a particular political group reflects that group's proportion of the membership of the authority.

3.2.3 Based on the proposed numbers of committees, the total number of committee places will be set out in an appendix to this report, which will follow in a supplement.

3.3 Exemption

3.3.1 The Council has previously exempted from political balance requirements a committee and two sub-committees as they would better perform their roles outside of the political balance calculations. To do so the Council was required to pass a resolution based upon no Member voting against the proposition at full Council.

3.3.2 The first such is the Constitution and Standards Committee, which terms of reference are set out at section 11.1 of Part 3(B) of the revised Constitution. It was considered that it must have a voice from all political groups on the Council which would not otherwise be achievable without enlarging the Committee.

3.3.3 The Senior Officer Appointments and Staffing Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee, which terms of reference are set out at section 1.5 and 1.6 of Part 3(B) of the Constitution. The primary function of the Sub-Committee is to make appointments or recommendations to Council on appointments regarding chief officers of the Council. In its alternative form, the sub-committee(s) exist to deal with disciplinary matters and appeals. There was considered to be an optimum size for such sub-committees and, again, it was agreed on the basis that it was important that all political groups on the Council had a vote on these matters.

3.3.4 The Licensing Panels of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee with terms of reference set out at section 8.4 of the Constitution. The primary function being to deal with applications, determinations and reviews of licences or registrations, and any related matter, in respect of any licensed activity that is the responsibility of the Authority (other than under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005).

3.3.5 Section 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 permits an ordinary committee or sub-committee to not comply with political balance rules but only where approved by the Authority in such manner as may be

prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State and without any Member of the Authority voting against them.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND DELEGATED AUTHORITY

5.1 Once a determination has been made that complies with s.15 of the LGHA, under s.16 it becomes the duty of the Authority or committee to exercise the power to make appointments as soon as practicable thereafter, and to give effect to such wishes about who is to be appointed to the seats allocated to a particular political group as are expressed by that group. For this reason, nominations have been requested for noting for this Council but authority is recommended to the proper officer to make the appointments in fulfilment of the statutory duty.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT; STAFFING AND ASSETS

6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 There is a requirement under the Council's Constitution that the Annual Council meeting shall appoint Members to Committees. If the Council were not to do so, then there would be a risk in that Council business could be impeded.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

8.1 It is for political groups to decide how they wish to allocate their committee places and appointments.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Anna Perrett
Democracy Business Manager
telephone: (0151) 691 8564

email: annaperret@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

1. Calculation of Committee Places (to be circulated in supplement)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Previous reports on the appointment of committees and the Council's Constitution. Agenda and outcome notes from the Governance Member Working Group and Group Leaders' Meeting (Committee System)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The report is being considered by Full Council in accordance with the Policy Framework (f) 'Agreeing or amending the committee structure, the remit/terms of reference of committees, their size and membership.'

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Council	24 May 2023
Council	25 May 2022
Council	26 May 2021
Council	28 September 2020