

CHANGES TO COMMITTEES, PANELS AND BOARDS - 2021/22

Council	15 July 2021
Report Author	Nick Hughes, Committee Services Manager
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted

Executive Summary:

The report allows Council to agree on the number and size of the Committees, Panels and Boards for the remainder of the municipal year and then subsequently the proportionality of the Council as result of the resignation of Cllr Game as a Councillor. The report then goes on to address the allocation of seats on those bodies to political Groups.

Recommendation(s):

- 4.2.1 That Council agrees with the option outlined at paragraph 4.1.1 to achieve proportionality.

- 5.5.1 To note the corresponding group nominations to Committees, Panels and Boards for the remainder of 2021/22 as per paragraph 5.4.1. (The names of those Councillors so nominated will be presented at the meeting)

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

There are no direct financial implications from this report. However members allowances included in the annual budget are based on the existing structure and any increase in size or number of committees would require approval of the resulting increase in the budget.

Legal

The composition and allocation of membership of committees has been based on the relevant legislative requirements.

Corporate

There are no direct Corporate Implications

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at

the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- To foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Corporate Priorities

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- Communities

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 The report allows Council to agree on the number and size of the Committees, Panels and Boards for the remainder of the municipal year and then subsequently the proportionality of the Council as result of Cllr Game resigning his position as a Councillor. The report then goes on to address the allocation of seats on those bodies to political Groups.

2.0 Political Balance

2.1 The political balance of the Council as a result of Cllr Game resigning as a Councillor is shown below:

Political Group	No. of Cllrs before changes	No. of Cllrs after changes
Conservative	26	25
Labour	17	17
Thanet Independents	6	6
Green	4	4
Independent (not in a group)	3	3
Vacant Seats	0	1

3.0 Political Proportionality

- 3.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to allocate seats on committees to political Groups in accordance with the size of each group on the Council as a whole and in accordance with the following principles which should be observed as far as is reasonably practicable:
- a) That not all seats on the same committee are allocated to the same political group;
 - b) That the majority of the seats on a committee are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the Council's membership;
 - c) That, subject to a) and b) above, the number of seats on committees allocated to each political group bears the same proportion of the total of all the seats on committees;
 - d) That, subject to a), b) and c) above, the number of seats on a committee allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all seats on that committee.
- 3.2 For the purposes of political balance a Group is required to have at least two members and to have been formally constituted as a political group before the meeting.
- 3.3 The report author has contacted the leaders of the political groups and consensus on an option to achieve political balance has been achieved. Therefore the Council is asked to agree to the following solution.

4.0 Consensus Solution

- 4.1.1 That the number of seats on the Planning Committee for the Conservative group is reduced from seven to six and the number of seats for the Green group is increased from one to two. In addition one seat is removed from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Conservative group loses that seat. The table below shows the changes to numbers serving on Committees as a result of this proposal:

Committees	Total	Conservative Group	Labour Group	Thanet Independents	Green Group
Planning Committee	14	6	4	1	2
Licensing Board	12	6	4	1	1
Overview and Scrutiny Panel	13	6	4	2	1
Gov. and Audit	12	6	4	1	1
General Purposes	12	6	4	1	1
B&EA Working Party	6	3	2	1	0
CRWP	4	2	1	1	0
Totals	73	35	24	8	6

4.1.2 The overall political balance calculation for the proposal shown above is available at Annex 1.

4.2 Recommendation

4.2.1 That Council agrees the option outlined at paragraph 4.1.1 to achieve proportionality.

5.0 Nominations of Members to serve on Committees

5.1 Members are reminded that Section 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 states that where the Council has determined the allocation to different groups of the seats to which the Act applies, it shall be the duty of the authority to give effect to a Group's wishes about who is to be appointed to the seats that they have been allocated.

5.2 Therefore the corresponding amendments to group nominations as outlined below must also be made.

5.3 In addition the Conservative Group have also informed Democratic Services that Cllr Scott will be removed from the Planning Committee.

5.4 Consensus Option

5.4.1 That a seat is removed from the Conservative Group on the Planning Committee and the Green Group gain a seat on the Planning Committee. That

a seat is removed from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Conservative Group lose this seat.

This is summarised in the table below:

Committee/Group	Current Position	New Position
Planning Committee		
Conservative Group	7 seats	6 seats (Cllr Scott to be the Cllr removed)
Green Group	1 seat	2 seats
Planning Reserves		
Conservative Group	7 seats	6 seats
Green Group	1 seat	2 seats
Overview & Scrutiny Panel		
Conservative Group	7 seats	6 Seats

5.5 Recommendation

- 5.5.1 To note the corresponding group nominations to Committees, Panels and Boards for the remainder of 2021/22 as per paragraph 5.4.1. (The names of those Councillors so nominated will be presented at the meeting)

6.0 Changes to Chair and Vice-Chairs of Committees

- 6.1 Any vacancies in Chairs or Vice Chair positions as a result of the changes outlined in this report would be considered as casual vacancies and as such would be filled by the relevant committee at their next meeting.

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Annex List

Annex 1: Proportionality calculations for main committees covered by Local Government & Housing Act 1989

Background Papers

None

Corporate Consultation

Finance: Chris Blundell, Director of Finance

Legal: Estelle Culligan (Director of Law and Democracy)