

# **CHANGES TO COMMITTEES, PANELS AND BOARDS - 2021/22**

<b>Council</b>	14 October 2021
<b>Report Author</b>	Nick Hughes, Committee Services Manager
<b>Status</b>	For Decision
<b>Classification:</b>	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 election of Councillor Leys and the resignation of Cllr Roper 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 the election of Councillor Leys and the resignation of Cllr Roper 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 the election of Cllr Leys and the resignation of Councillor Roper is shown below:

Political Group	No. of Cllrs before changes	No. of Cllrs after changes
Conservative	25	<b>26</b>
Labour	17	17
Thanet Independents	6	6
Green	4	<b>3</b>
Independent (not in a group)	3	3
Vacant Seats	1	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 Overview and Scrutiny Panel is increased from 13 to 14 and that extra seat is given to the Conservative Group. That a seat on the Licensing Board is removed from the Green Group and is given to the Thanet Independent Group. That a seat on the Planning Committee is removed from the Green Group and is given to the Conservative Group. 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	7	4	1	1
Licensing Board	12	6	4	2	0
Overview and Scrutiny Panel	14	7	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	74	37	24	9	4

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 Consensus Option

5.4.1 That a seat is removed from the Green Group on the Planning Committee and the Conservative Group gains a seat on the Planning Committee. That a seat is removed from the Green Group on the Licensing Board and the Thanet Independent Group gains a seat on the Licensing Board. That a seat is added to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and this seat is given to the Conservative Group.

This is summarised in the table below:

<b>Committee/Group</b>	<b>Current Position</b>	<b>New Position</b>
<b>Planning Committee</b>		
Conservative Group	6 seats	7 seats (new nomination needed)
Green Group	2 seat	1 seats (1 Councillor to be removed)
<b>Planning Reserves</b>		
Conservative Group	6 seats	7 seats (new nomination needed)
Green Group	2 seat	1 seats (1 Councillor to be removed)
<b>Licensing Board</b>		
Green Group	2 seats	1 Seats (1 Councillor to be removed)
Thanet Independents	1 seats	2 Seats (new nomination needed)
<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>		
Conservative Group	6 seats	7 seats (new nomination needed)

## 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.

**Contact Officer:** Nick Hughes, Committee Services Manager

**Reporting to:** Estelle Culligan (Director of Law and Democracy)

## 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)