

DECISION ITEM

| REPORT OF | MEETING | DATE | ITEM NO |
|--------------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| HEAD OF GOVERNANCE | COUNCIL | 18 MARCH 2024 | 8 |

CONFIRMATION OF COMMITTEES AND ALLOCATION OF MEMBERSHIP

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources, Councillor Ellie Gaunt.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The council is required annually to confirm the committees that it wishes to appoint and allocate the membership of certain committees in accordance with the principles of political balance under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Appoint the committees and joint committees set out in appendix 1 for the municipal year 2024-2025, with the same terms of reference as presently agreed.
2. Allocate committee seats in accordance with the principles of political balance as set out in the table in paragraph 6.
3. Appoint members to seats on committees required to be politically balanced in accordance with the nominations made by the political groups.
4. Reconfirm the panel members of the JNC (Chief Executives) Independent Panel as the Independent Persons Mr Peter Clements, Mr Brian Horrocks and Mrs Helen Broughton.
5. Reconfirm the Leader of the Council as the representative to the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board.
6. Appoint members to the Licensing Committee, which is not required to be politically balanced.

REPORT

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

1. Under its constitution, the council is required annually to decide which committees to establish for the municipal year; decide the size and terms of reference for those committees; and decide the allocation of seats on those committees to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules where applicable.

- Appendix 1 sets out the proposed committees for the council for 2024-25. The proposed committees reflect the committees for the present municipal year. The council is invited to appoint those committees as its committees for the municipal year 2024-25 with the size as set out and the terms of reference as set out in the constitution.

POLITICAL BALANCE

- The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the council to calculate the membership of committees in accordance with the requirements of political balance set out in the act. The act also requires that the council give effect to those calculations by allocating seats in accordance with the wishes of the political groups¹ to whom the seats have been allocated². The four principles of political balance can be summarised like this:
 - All seats on a committee must not be allocated to the same group;
 - The majority group must have the majority of seats on each committee;
 - The total number of committee seats across the council must be allocated proportionately to the number of seats each group has on the full council; and
 - The seats on each committee must be allocated in proportion to the number of seats of each group on the full council.
- The four principles are in order of priority. This means that the second principle is applied subject to the first. Similarly, the third principle is applied subject to the first and the second, and so on.
- Neither the Licensing Committee³ nor the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board⁴ is subject to the political balance rules.
- The table below sets out a distribution of seats across committees, which reflects the current distribution of seats and which fulfils the requirement for political balance. Committees that are not required to be politically balanced are not included.

| Committee | Total seats | Con | Ind | Lab | Non-aligned |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-------------|
| Executive | 12 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Internal Affairs Scrutiny | 12 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Community Focus Scrutiny | 12 | 7 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Planning | 12 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Public Protection | 12 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Audit and Governance | 9 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| Standards | 5 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Chief Officers Employment | 6 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

The table above is not the only possible permutation which would meet the requirements for political balance.

- The proposed committee membership reflects the committee membership for the municipal year 2023/24. The council is invited to make those individual appointments at today's meeting or make amendments, whilst being obliged to follow the seats allocated to each group. The nominations are set out in appendix 1.

¹ A political group must have at least two members to count for the purposes of the 1989 act.

² Where a seat is allocated in accordance with the political balance principles to a member who do not belong to a political group, the choice of non-aligned member to fill the seat rests with the council.

³ The Licensing Committee is not subject to the political balance rules because it is appointed under the Licensing Act 2003, not the Local Government Act 1972.

⁴ The joint committee is not subject to the political balance rules because it is a not a body at least three seats on which fall from time to time to be filled by appointments made by the council (see paragraph 1(c) of schedule 1 to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989).

BLACKPOOL, FYLDE AND WYRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY BOARD

8. The council is part of a joint committee with Blackpool and Wyre councils known as the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board. The membership of the joint committee is one councillor from each authority, with the joint committee also having three co-opted members. The joint committee is not required to be politically balanced⁵.

LICENSING COMMITTEE

9. The Licensing Committee is not subject to the political balance rules. It is concerned exclusively with carrying out the council's responsibilities under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005. The committee has a membership of 12 and the council is invited to appoint that number of members to the committee, including appointments as chairman and vice-chairman. By convention, all Public Protection Committee members also sit as members of the Licensing Committee.

| CORPORATE PRIORITIES | |
|--|---|
| Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy | ✓ |
| Environment – To deliver services customers expect | ✓ |
| Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way | ✓ |
| Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit | ✓ |

| IMPLICATIONS | |
|---|--|
| Finance | None arising from the report |
| Legal | Political balance is a legal requirement for most committees of the council. |
| Community Safety | None arising from this report |
| Human Rights and Equalities | None arising from this report |
| Sustainability and Environmental Impact | None arising from this report |
| Health & Safety and Risk Management | None arising from this report |

| SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS |
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| The council receives a similar report each year at the meeting preceding its annual meeting. In an election year, the report must be presented to the annual meeting. |

| BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM | | |
|---|------|--------------------------------|
| Name of document | Date | Where available for inspection |
| N/A | | |

| LEAD AUTHOR | CONTACT DETAILS | DATE |
|-------------|--|------------------|
| Ian Curtis | ian.curtis@fylde.gov.uk | 15 February 2024 |

⁵ The joint committee is not subject to the political balance rules because it is not a body at least three seats on which fall from time to time to be filled by appointments made by the council (see paragraph 1(c) of schedule 1 to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989).

