

# Harborough District Council



## Report to Council Meeting of 24 July 2023

<b>Title:</b>	Arrangements for the Municipal Year 2023-2024
<b>Status:</b>	Public
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<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Leader of the Council - Cllr Knowles
<b>Appendices:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Notice of Determination of the Allocation of Seats following a change of the Political Groups</li><li>B. Cabinet Portfolios</li><li>C. Representatives on Outside Bodies</li><li>D. Delegation of functions by and to the Council</li></ul>

### Summary

- i. As a consequence of the Council being in no overall control following local government elections on 4 May 2023, it was not possible at Annual Council on 15 May 2023 to explicitly confirm all of the democratic arrangements for the 2023 / 2024 municipal year.
- ii. This report confirms:
  - a. the updated determination of political balance;
  - b. allocation of seats to committees and sub-committees;
  - c. appointments to outside bodies;
  - d. delegation of functions to and by the Council
  - e. creation of Cabinet sub-committees
  - f. cabinet portfolios and members

### Recommendations

1. That Council note the democratic arrangements set out within this report for the municipal year 2023 / 2024.

### Reasons for Recommendations

- iii. At annual Council on 15 May 2023, Council resolved to establish committees and sub-committees and delegated to the Director of Law and Governance the authority to give effect to the political balance arrangements. This reports confirms the democratic arrangements of the Council for the municipal year 2023-2024.

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Following local government elections, there are a number of democratic arrangements which need to be completed. It was not possible to confirm these arrangements at Annual Council as a consequence of the early date of the meeting combined with the change of administration.
- 1.2. This report confirms the democratic arrangements for the Council for the Municipal Year 2023-2024.

## 2. Background

- 2.1. With the formation of a coalition following the local government election in May 2023, and an unusually early annual council being scheduled, there was a lack of clarity or direction at the point of dispatch of the agenda for the annual meeting of council on 15 May 2023. Accordingly, the Annual Council meeting resolved to maintain the status quo in relation to committees, sub-committees and appointments to outside bodies.
- 2.2. This report provides an update to the arrangements which have now been clarified following annual Council.

## 3. Details

### Political Balance

- 3.1. At Annual Council on 15 May 2023, it was noted that the political balance of the Council was as set out in Table 1.

**Table 1: Political Balance for 2023 - 2024**

<b>Group</b>	<b>No. of Councillors</b>	<b>% of Council</b>
Conservative	15	44 (44.1176)
Liberal Democrat	13	38 (38.2352)
Labour	3	9 (8.8235)
Green	3	9 (8.8235)

Other	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100</b>

- 3.2. Members will recall that political balance is necessary to ensure that representation on Council bodies that are subject to political balance reflect the democratically elected balance of the Council.
- 3.3. On 17 May 2023 it was confirmed that a new political group had been formed called the Harborough Coalition Group. This group comprised Liberal Democrat, Green and Labour party representatives and was sufficient in number to become the majority group. However, as the Council had determined its political balance on 15 May 2023, the Council was prevented from re-determining its political balance until 16 June 2023 by virtue of regulation 17 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.
- 3.4. On 16 June 2023 the Chief Executive, as the Proper Officer for such functions, issued a notice of determination of the allocation of seats following a change in the political groups – see further Appendix A.
- 3.5. The application of the recalculation of the political balance following formation of the coalition group, combined with the retention of the Scrutiny Commission and the increasing of the Licensing Committee (and therefore the Regulatory Committee also) to the statutory minimum of 10 members, provides the allocation of seats on existing active committees as set out at Table 2.

**Table 2: Seats according to political balance 2023 – 2024**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Conservative seats (44%)</b>	<b>Grouped Seats (56%)</b>
<b>Planning</b>	9	4 (3.96)	5 (5.04)
<b>Regulatory</b>	10	4 (4.4)	6 (5.6)
<b>Constitutional Review</b>	7	3 (3.08)	4 (3.92)
<b>Audit &amp; Standards</b>	7	3 (3.08)	4 (3.92)
<b>Employment</b>	5	2 (2.2)	3 (2.8)
<b>Investigations</b>	5	2 (2.2)	3 (2.8)
<b>Appeals</b>	5	2 (2.2)	3 (2.8)
<b>Licensing</b>	10	4 (4.84)	6 (6.16)
<b>Performance scrutiny</b>	7	3 (3.08)	4 (3.92)

<b>Communities Scrutiny</b>	7	3 (3.08)	4 (3.92)
<b>Scrutiny Commission</b>	10	4.4	5.6
	<b>82</b>		

Committee name	seats in total	Example	Conservative seats	Grouped Seats	
			44%	56%	
Planning	9	13	5.72	7.28	
Regulatory	10	11	4.84	6.16	
CRC	7	9	3.96	5.04	
Audit and standards	7	9	3.96	5.04	
Employment	5		0	0	
Investigations	5	7	3.08	3.92	
Appeals	5	7	3.08	3.92	
Licensing	10		0	0	
performance scrutiny	7		0	0	
Communities scrutiny	7		0	0	
scrutiny commission	10		0	0	
R and B joint committee			0	0	
	82	56	24.64	44%	
			31.36	56%	
			56		

### Allocation of seats to committees and sub-committees;

3.6. The nominations put forward by the Conservative Group following Annual Council in respect of the above committees and panels remain unchanged. However, the

recalculation of political balance means the Harborough Coalition Group allocates all other seats, rather than each individual party allocating seats.

3.7. The membership of all Council Committees and Panels is therefore confirmed as set out below:

3.7.1. **Appeals** – total of 5 seats

Coalition: 3 seats: Cllrs Elliott, Finan and Johnson

Conservative: 2 seats: Cllrs Bateman and Dann

3.7.2. **Audit & Standards** – total of 7 seats

Coalition: 4 seats Cllrs Finan, Forman (VC), Gair (C) and Johnson

Conservative: 3 seats Cllrs Bateman, Nunn and Page

3.7.3. **Communities Scrutiny** – total of 7 seats

Coalition: 4 seats Cllrs James (C), Johnson (VC), Sarfas and Taylor n

Conservative: 3 seats Cllrs Bannister, Nunn and Whelband

3.7.4. **Constitutional Review** – total of 7 seats

Coalition: 4 seats Cllrs Anderson, Asher, Johnson and Knowles (C)

Conservative: 3 seats Cllrs Grafton-Reed, King and Rickman

3.7.5. **Employment** – total of 5 seats

Coalition: 3 seats Cllrs Elliott (C), Finan (VC) and Gair (C)

Conservative: 2 seats Cllrs Bateman and King

3.7.6. **Investigation & Disciplinary** – total of 5 seats

Coalition: 3 seats Cllrs Burrell, Gair and James

Conservative: 2 seats Cllrs Bilbie and Rickman

3.7.7. **Licensing** – total of 10 seats

Coalition: 6 seats Cllrs Anderson, Birch, Burrell, Finan (C), Gair and Sarfas (VC)

Conservative: 4 seats Cllrs Bannister, Grafton-Reed, Hollick and King

3.7.8. **Performance Scrutiny** – total of 7 seats

Coalition: 4 seats Cllrs Asher, Birch, Burrell (VC) and Elliott (C)

Conservative: 3 seats Cllrs Dann, King and Rickman

3.7.9. **Planning** – total of 9 seats

Coalition: 5 seats Cllrs Asher, Burrell (C), Elliott, Gair and James (VC)  
Conservative: 4 seats Cllrs Mahal, Modha, Whelband and Worrell

3.7.10. **Regulatory** – total of 10 seats

Coalition: 6 seats Cllrs Anderson, Birch, Burrell, Finan (C), Gair and Sarfas (VC)  
Conservative: 4 seats Cllrs Bannister, Grafton-Reed, Hollick and King

3.7.11. **Scrutiny Commission** – total of 10 seats

Coalition: 5 seats Cllrs Burrell, Elliott, Forman, Gair and James  
Conservative: 5 seats Cllrs Bateman, Dann, Hallam (C), Page and Rickman

### **Appointments to outside bodies**

- 3.8. There are a number of bodies and organisations that the Council or Cabinet nominates representatives to. These are set out in Appendix C, with confirmation as to the Council's representative upon the outside body.
- 3.9. In addition to nominating councillors to outside bodies, the Leader has indicated that he has identified the following councillor champions:
- 3.9.1. Armed Forces Champion – Cllr Asher
  - 3.9.2. Equality Champion – Cllr Burrell
  - 3.9.3. Young Persons Champion – Cllr Anderson
  - 3.9.4. Domestic Abuse Champion – Cllr Forman.

### **Delegation of functions**

- 3.10. Councils are able to delegate the discharge of their statutory functions (executive and non-executive) to other local authorities. This power is reflected within the Council's constitution at section 4 of Article 11.
- 3.11. Appendix D to this report records the functions which the Council has delegated to other local authorities, as well as the local authorities that have delegated functions to the Council.

### **Appointment of Cabinet**

- 3.12. The Leader has confirmed that he will be supported by a 6 Cabinet members. Each member of Cabinet will be responsible for a portfolio of issues, as set out below. The opposition group have nominated Shadow portfolio representatives, who are also identified below in brackets
- 3.12.1. **Strategy (Leader) – Cllr Knowles (Cllr Bateman)**

- 3.12.2. **Finance – Cllr Graves** (Cllr King)
  - 3.12.3. **Environmental & Climate Change – Cllr Woodiwiss** (Cllr Nunn)
  - 3.12.4. **Culture, Leisure & Tourism – Cllr Whitmore** (Cllr Rickman)
  - 3.12.5. **Corporate – Cllr Beadle** (Cllr Dann)
  - 3.12.6. **Planning – Cllr Galton** (Cllr Bannister)
  - 3.12.7. **Wellbeing – Cllr Knight** (Cllr Whelband)
- 3.13. Further details as to the content of each portfolio of issues is attached as Appendix B.

### **Cabinet Sub-Committees and Advisory Panels**

- 3.14. The Leader has indicated it is likely that Cabinet will consider a report at its next meeting as to the nature and remit of any sub-committees it wishes to create, but that it is likely that a Grants sub-committee will be retained.
- 3.15. Similarly, Cabinet will review the nature and remit of Cabinet advisory panels, however no change is expected in respect of the existing Cabinet advisory panels for Member Development and the Local Plan.
- 3.16. Any changes made to the executive arrangements by the Leader will be reported to Council retrospectively in accordance with the Constitution.

## **4. Implications of Decisions**

### **Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1. The Council is committed to delivering its corporate priorities as set out in its corporate plan. Providing the information contained within this report gives assurance that the Council continues to work to deliver these priorities.

### **Consultation**

- 4.2. The identification of individuals within this report reflects the nominations provided by the relevant group leaders. No further consultation is required.

### **Financial**

- 4.3. The financial consequences of the number of committees and representatives set out within this report are within the budget set by the Council. The current budget for members allowances and expenses is £319k.
- 4.4. The potential increased cost imposed by additional Cabinet Members is mitigated by other savings and changes to expected spending in the budget. The budget will be monitored in year, as it has been in previous years, to ensure that all costs associated with members allowances and expenses are kept within budget.
- 4.5. It is intended that an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) will be convened to review the Members Allowance Scheme at an early stage of the new administration. Once the report of the IRP is received, it will be reported to Council for decision. That report will contain full details on the financial implications of any options presented in the report. Once Members decide what, if any, changes to make to the Members Allowance

Scheme, the financial implications will be incorporated into the budget in accordance with the usual budget setting process.

## **Legal**

- 4.6. The requirement to determine and update the political balance calculation is contained within statute. This report therefore ensures that the Council is meeting its legal obligations in this regard.
- 4.7. The identification of nominations to committees, Cabinet and outside bodies is required to aid transparency. Any changes during the municipal year to these nominations will be reported to the next relevant meeting.

## **Environment Implications**

- 4.8. Nothing within this report is anticipated to impact upon the Council's commitment to achieving net zero carbon.

## **Risk Management**

- 4.9. The contents of this report do not pose any risk implications for the Council – the potential risk would arise from failing to report the contents of this report.

## **Equalities Impact**

- 4.10. The Council has a statutory duty to consider and demonstrate equalities impact in all of its activities. However, the report does not impact upon the public sector equality duty given it reports the application of political balance and decisions made as to which individual is allocated to which council role. This in all decisions, and Equalities Impact Assessment may need to be provided.

## **Data Protection**

- 4.11. This report contains no private information.

# **5. Alternative Options Considered**

- 5.1. The Council is required to publicise its arrangements in respect of political balance, and has collated within this report for ease of reference the information that would have been provided to Annual Council in respect of the outcome of the application of political balance, the formation of the new administration and the nomination of councillors to council roles and outside bodies.

# **6. Recommendation**

- 6.1. Council is invited to note:
  - 6.1.1. the updated calculation of political balance;
  - 6.1.2. the nomination of councillors to committees and panels in accordance with the updated political balance calculations;
  - 6.1.3. the establishment of a new Cabinet of 6 members in addition to the Leader, and the allocation of portfolios and shadow portfolios;
  - 6.1.4. the creation of two Cabinet sub-committees;
  - 6.1.5. the nomination of councillors to represent the Council on outside bodies;



## 7. Background papers

7.1. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/42/part/I/crossheading/political-balance-on-committees-etc>

7.2. The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1990/1553/regulation/17/made>

