

MEETING:	COUNCIL
MEETING DATE:	17 JANUARY 2014
TITLE OF REPORT	APPOINTMENTS TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES
REPORT BY:	DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER

1. Classification

Open

2. Key Decision

This is not an executive decision.

3. Wards Affected

County-wide

4. Purpose

In light of changes to the political balance to the Council, to:

- (a) determine the number of seats on each committee;
- (b) approve the allocation of seats to political groups;
- (c) receive nominations from those groups; and
- (d) if necessary, in the light of those nominations from political groups, consider any appointments to offices of either Chairman or Vice-Chairman of a Committee required as a consequence.

5. Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) **Council determines whether it wishes the size of ordinary committees and the allocation of seats on those committees to political groups either to be increased as shown at Table 1 or decreased as shown at Table 2 in appendix 1;**
- (b) **the wishes of the political groups as to filling their respective allocations of seats as at appendix 2 (to be tabled following the above vote at recommendation a above) be noted;**

- (c) **should the membership of committees at appendix 2 result in any vacancies the appointments of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen be confirmed in accordance with appendix 2; and**
- (d) **the partial suspension of the rules of proportionality, in respect of the Regulatory Sub-Committee, the River Lugg Internal Drainage Board and the Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee, remain in place.**

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 To draw up a different set of committees of a different size and composition with different terms of reference. As the need for change arises from a shift in political balance rather than from any other governance considerations this is not recommended with only 16 months of the term of this council remaining.

7. Reasons for Recommendations

- 7.1 The Council is required to review its political composition and how this is applied to appointments to committees and sub-committees of the Council at each Annual Meeting of Council, or as soon as practicable after a change in political balance.
- 7.2 A change in the Council's political composition has taken place, following the Pontrilas by-election, a decision of a previously ungrouped Member to join a Group, and another Member's decision to alter group affiliation.

8. Key Considerations

- 8.1 The membership of the respective political groups is now as follows:

	Numbers in Group
Conservative	29
Herefordshire Independent	14
It's Our County	12
Liberal Democrat	3
Total	58

- 8.2 The Council is under a duty to ensure membership of those committees covered by the relevant rules reflects the political composition of the Council, as far as practicable, by allocating seats on the committees to the political groups in proportion to their numerical strength on the Council, whilst also maintaining a similar proportional balance of overall seat numbers.

- 8.3 The Council must then accept nominations made by the groups for filling the seats allocated to them.
- 8.4 The change in proportionality has necessitated a change in the number of seats on committees to ensure an even number on each relevant committee. This needs to be achieved either by increasing or by reducing the size of committees where relevant by one seat.
- 8.5 The political composition of Committees depending on whether, where relevant, the size of Committees is increased by one seat or reduced by one seat is shown in the tables at Appendix 1.
- 8.6 Appendix 2, to be tabled following the vote on recommendation (a), drawn up in consultation with the Council's Group Leaders, shows the membership of committees; and any nominations for committee chairman or vice chairman appointments necessary following membership changes.
- 8.7 It is not proposed to vary Council's decision in May 2013 to allocate certain seats on a different basis from that of political proportion. Council took a **nem con vote** (where no Member votes against the proposal) to permit this approach in respect of: the Regulatory Sub-Committee, the River Lugg Internal Drainage Board and the Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee. This is again being recommended and these bodies have therefore not been included in the proportionality calculation.
- 8.8 It is not proposed to review the appointments to outside bodies. Any changes required as a consequence of resignations of Councillors will be made by the Chief Executive in consultation with Group Leaders, in accordance with the scheme of delegation.

9. Community Impact

- 9.1 There are no implications.

10. Equality and Human Rights

- 10.1 There are no implications.

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1 The adjustment in committee size either way carries an adjustment in member expenses claims which is so insignificant as to not to be quantifiable.

12. Legal Implications

- 12.1 The Council is required to ensure that the allocation of seats to Committees is compliant with relevant rules contained in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Regulations made under that Act. The proposals in this report comply with the requirements.

13. Risk Management

- 13.1 There are no risk management implications.

14. Consultees

14.1 Group Leaders.

15. Appendices

15.1 Appendix 1 – Possible Council Committee Size and allocation of seats
Appendix 2 - Membership of Committees (To be tabled following the vote on recommendation a.)

16. Background Papers

16.1 None identified.