

Report To: Council

Date of Meeting: 10 June 2014

Lead Member / Officer: Democratic Services Manager

Report Author: Steve Price

Title: Committee Appointments and Political Balance

1. What is the report about?

This report details changes to the memberships of the Council's committees and appointments to be made by Council to the Democratic Services Committee.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The appointment of the chair and members of the Democratic Services Committee falls to full Council. Detailing the position of other committees will inform members of the position of their committees and of any actions required to maintain the political balance of these committees.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Council notes the issues raised and appoints the chair and ten other members to the Democratic Services Committee for 2014 / 2015.

4. Report details.

Democratic Services Committee

4.1 At the Annual Meeting on the 15 May Council decided that the membership of the new Democratic Services Committee required under the Local Government Measure would be 11 councillors which would not include a Cabinet member.

4.2 Section 11 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires the Council to appoint a committee to review the adequacy of provision by the authority of staff, accommodation and other resources to discharge democratic services functions, and to make reports and recommendations to the authority in relation to such provision.

4.3 The members of the Democratic Services Committee must be appointed by Full Council. There are to be no co-opted members. Under the Measure there may be no more than one member of the Cabinet on the Committee (who cannot be the Leader), but Council in May 2012 decided that the membership would not include members of the Cabinet.

4.4 The Committee must be politically balanced and Council must appoint its chair who must not be a member of any of the political groups represented on the Cabinet. For Denbighshire, this means that the chair will be a member of the Labour group. The Labour group have nominated the existing chair, Councillor Barry Mellor.

4.5 The existing members of the Democratic Services Committee are Councillors Bill Cowie, Stuart Davies, Martyn Holland, Barry Mellor, Win Mullen-James, Bob Murray, Peter Owen, Merfyn Parry and Arwel Roberts. Councillor Butterfield has replaced Councillor Gareth Sandilands and a Plaid Cymru vacancy (Councillor Kensler left the Committee upon her appointment as Vice Chair of Council last month) is being filled by Councillor Cefyn Williams.

Scrutiny Committee Chairs

4.6 The 2011 Measure also governs the appointment process for the Scrutiny chairs. In Denbighshire this results in two of the three chair positions being allocated to the Labour group and the third position being allocated to the three political groups represented on Cabinet. The appointing groups have not notified Democratic Services of any changes to the 2013 / 14 chairing arrangements.

Seats on Committees

4.7 Appendix 1 gives a committee-by-committee view of the political balance requirements and vacant seats.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

The fair distribution of committee seats is essential to elected members and the democratic working of the Council.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

This report does not affect other services. Please see section 8 for a statement on costs.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.

Not required as this report does not introduce new policies, procedures or actions that would have an impact on equality issues.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

Regular consultation is undertaken with the group leaders on the committee membership issues affecting their groups. Council also receives reports on political balance at least once a year.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no direct costs arising from this report. The remuneration of members for undertaking specific roles e.g. on Cabinet or chairing a committee have been previously agreed by Council. The position of chair of the Democratic Services Committee does not receive a chairing allowance.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

Not applicable.

11. Power to make the Decision

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.