

Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 22 June 2020



Subject: Overview & Scrutiny Select Committees – Membership 2020/21

Responsible Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564180)

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564532)

Recommendations/Decisions Required

(1) That the Committee make appointment to membership of the following Select Committees for the 2020/21 municipal year, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny rules of the Council's Constitution:

- (a) Stronger Communities Select Committee;**
- (b) Stronger Council Select Committee; and**
- (c) Stronger Place Select Committee; and**

(2) That the Committee make appointment to the positions of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of each of the Select Committees for 2020/21.

Report

Introduction

1. As the Committee is aware, an Overview and Scrutiny framework based on a structure of three new select committees was established from the commencement of the 2019/20 municipal year. The responsibilities of each select committee reflect the themes of the Corporate Plan for 2018-2023.
2. The Overview and Scrutiny rules set out within Article 6 of the Council's Constitution require that the Committee determine the number of select committees and review whether they should continue in being, at its first meeting of each municipal year. Additionally, the membership of the select committees is to be appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the first meeting each year, as such appointments are reserved to the Committee and not made by the Council at its annual meeting.
3. The Overview and Scrutiny rules of the Constitution provide that membership of the select committees must reflect pro rata requirements and the lowest number of members necessary to achieve cross-party representation, whilst also allowing for the inclusion of members who are not members of a political group or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The following options are available to achieve the pro rata membership requirements of the Constitution, for the select committees for 2019/20.

Select Committee Membership – Pro Rata

4. Membership of the select committees has traditionally been based pro rata on eleven members. Given the current political composition of the Council, this approach provides

for select committee membership to include members of all political groups, but not councillors that are not currently members of a political group.

5. For 2019/20, the lowest number of members necessary to reflect pro rata requirements in the membership of the select committees, whilst also achieving the cross-party requirements of the Overview and Scrutiny rules of the Constitution, was fifteen members. Unfortunately, this pro rata approach also does not provide select committee membership for 2020/21, for councillors that are not currently members of a political group.
6. The extension of membership of the select committees to thirteen members for 2020/21 would provide one additional seat on the select committees for each of the Conservative and Loughton Residents Association Groups. In order to accommodate independent member representation on the select committees for the next year (if required), the Conservative Group and the Loughton Residents Association Group might wish to relinquish one of the additional seats arising from the extension of membership, in order that these positions may be filled by an independent member. Membership of the Committee is required to be appointed on a pro rata basis and such deviation requires no member of Council to vote against this arrangement. The Committee is advised however that no request for membership of the select committees has been made by any councillor that is not currently a member of a political group.
7. The Committee is requested to consider the issues set out above and to make appointment to membership of the select committees for 2020/21, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny rules of the Council's Constitution.
8. The Committee is reminded that the Constitution (Article 11, Paragraph 8 (Eligibility for Membership - Councillor Members)), provides that councillors appointed to the Audit and Governance Committee may not also be members of any select committee appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with responsibility for reviewing the Council's finances or financial procedures. For the purposes of the Council's current Overview and Scrutiny framework, this provision relates directly to the Stronger Council Select Committee.
9. Nominations to the select committees that have been submitted by Group Leaders are set out in the schedule attached as Appendix 1 to this report. Any further nominations will be reported at the meeting. If the number of nominations exceeds the available places, the Committee will be required to vote on these appointments.

Select Committees - Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen

10. Appointment to the positions of chairman and vice-chairman of each of the select committees are also reserved to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These appointments are excluded from the calculation arising from the existing protocol on the allocation of chairman and vice-chairman positions for other committees, sub-committees and panels.
11. The Committee is requested to make appointments to the position of chairman and vice-chairman of each select committee for 2020/21. Nominations for the respective chairman and vice-chairman submitted by Group Leaders are also set out in Appendix 1 and any further nominations will be reported at the meeting. Where more than one nomination is received for each position, the Committee will be required to vote on these appointments.

Resource Implications:

The recommendations of this report seek to enable membership of the select committees to achieve cross-party representation, whilst also allowing for the inclusion of members who are

not members of a political group or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council's constitution sets out rules for the management of its overview and scrutiny responsibilities.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district.

Consultation Undertaken:

None required.

Background Papers:

None

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

The Council's constitution sets out rules for the management of its overview and scrutiny responsibilities.

Equality:

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.