

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE: 23 JUNE 2021
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING
AUTHOR: ANDREW LEADBETTER

SUBJECT: APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES ETC.,
OUTSIDE BODIES AND MEMBER ROLES
2021-22

Purpose of Report

1. This report enables Members to consider/determine the following issues:
 - Responsibilities of the Fire Authority and its committees, boards etc.;
 - Political proportions on the Fire Authority;
 - Political proportionality rules (where they apply and where they don't and their affect upon the allocation of seats on committees etc.);
 - Appointment of Members to seats on committees etc;
 - Involvement of independent (non-elected) member;
 - Appointments to outside bodies;
 - Appointments to Member Champion roles; and
 - Continuation of Member/officer buddy arrangements.

Recommended:

Members are asked to:

- [1] Confirm the responsibilities of the Fire Authority set out in Appendix 1A;**
- [2] Agree the responsibilities of Committees, Boards and Groups set out in Appendix 1B;**
- [3] Note the political proportions on the Fire Authority set out in paragraph 4;**
- [4] Agree the approach to the allocation of seats explained in paragraphs 5 and 6 and Appendix 2A;**
- [5] Agree the appointments required as set out in Appendix 2B;**
- [6] Agree the involvement of the independent (non-elected) member (to act in an advisory capacity) as set out in paragraphs 10 to 12 of**

the report and shown in Appendix 2B;

- [7] Agree the appointments to outside bodies set out in Appendix 3;
- [8] Agree the appointments to Member Champions roles set out in Appendix 4; and
- [9] Agree the continuation of the Member/officer buddy arrangements.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY

- 2. The responsibilities of the Fire Authority are set out in Appendix 1A.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COMMITTEES, BOARDS ETC.

- 3. Appendix 1B contains details of the responsibilities of the respective committees etc.

Note: Responsibilities for plans, strategies and policies are included.

POLITICAL PROPORTIONS ON THE FIRE AUTHORITY

- 4. Political proportions are important as they determine the allocation of seats on some committees. At the time of writing it is anticipated that there will be three Political Groups.

Political Group	Seats	Percentage
Labour	12	52.17%
Conservative	8	34.78%
Independent	3	13.04%
Total	23	100.00%

POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY RULES (WHERE THEY APPLY AND WHERE THEY DON'T AND THEIR AFFECT UPON THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES ETC.)

- 5. The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and Local Government and Housing Act 1989 make provision for the handling of political group representation on the Fire Authority's committees. For the sake of simplicity the term 'political proportionality rules' has been used.
- 6. The political proportionality rules are not straight-forward. They involve the application of certain principles '...as far as reasonably practicable...' in allocating seats to political groups. These principles are set out below:
 - a) that not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same political group;

- b) that the majority of the seats on the body is allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
- c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority; and
- d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of the seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO AVAILABLE SEATS ON COMMITTEES ETC.

- 7. Members are asked to note the information above and in Appendix 2A when considering the allocation of seats and appointments required in Appendix 2B.
- 8. Not all of the Authority's bodies are caught by the political proportionality rules. For example, the Member Training and Development Group is not.
- 9. Some other bodies exist where there is no requirement for appointments to be made, e.g. Closure of Accounts Committee (role fulfilled by Performance and Overview Committee) and Staffing Committee (same membership as Brigade Managers' Pay and Performance Committee).

INVOLVEMENT OF INDEPENDENT (NON-ELECTED) MEMBERS

- 10. Last year two independent (non-elected) members attended the Governance and Constitution Committee and one independent (non-elected) member attended the Performance and Overview Committee and the Member Training and Development Group. The independent (non-elected) members shared responsibility for attendance at the Estates and Property Committee. They fulfil an advisory role.
- 11. Recently, one of the independent (non-elected) members confirmed that she is unable to continue in the role. The Group Leaders have agreed that there shall only be one independent (non-elected) member for now. This situation will be reviewed once the White Paper on fire reform has been released and its implications considered.
- 12. The remaining independent (non-elected) member has agreed to attend Governance and Constitution Committee, Performance and Overview Committee and Estates and Property Committee. He has also

indicated a willingness to be involved in the Member Training and Development Group as and when required.

OUTSIDE BODIES

13. Members are asked to make appointments to the outside bodies covered in Appendix 3. Members will see that the roles of the bodies and delegated powers (if any) are set out in the Appendix.

MEMBER CHAMPIONS

14. Members are asked to appoint the Member Champions covered in Appendix 4.
15. The Governance and Constitution Committee intends to review the Member Champion roles during 2021/22.

MEMBER/OFFICER BUDDY ARRANGEMENTS

16. The Authority operates a Member/officer buddy arrangement. This is intended to provide Members with officer support to help develop their overall and wider knowledge of the organisation and the fire and rescue sector generally.
17. Members are asked to agree the continuation of the buddy arrangements. The alignment of Members with officers will be confirmed shortly after the meeting to take account of Member appointments e.g. Member Champion roles.

Financial Implications

18. The cost of operating the democratic process is contained within the Authority's budget.

Legal Implications

19. The Fire Authority has delegated certain functions to various decision making bodies and has in place arrangements to facilitate good communications between Members and officers. The appointments made as a result of this report help to ensure that decisions made will be set within an appropriate legal framework.

Equality & Diversity Implications

20. There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

Environmental Implications

21. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE