



Northumberland

County Council

County Council

Wednesday, 1 May 2024

Establishment of Committees and Appointment of Chairs and Vice Chairs

: **Report of:** Dr. Helen Paterson, Chief Executive

1. Link to Key Priorities of the Corporate Plan

The report links to all of the priorities in the 2023-26 Corporate Plan by establishing committees to enable the discharge of business relating to the non-executive functions of the Council.

2. Purpose of report

To make arrangements for the discharge of the non-executive functions of the County Council through the appointment of committees, appointing Members to those committees in accordance with the proportionality of the Council and to agree their terms of reference.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that Council:

3.2 Establishes the committees, agrees the size and numbers of members of the committees and appoints the chairs of committees set out in Appendix A;

3.3 Appoints the working groups currently established by Council, numbers of members and chairs and approves the terms of reference as set out in Appendix B;

3.4 Appoints ungrouped members to committees of the Council;

3.5 Appoints Peter Topping as independent chair of Audit Committee for a term of office for a period of two years, with an extension to that term to be agreed by Council on the recommendation of the Executive Director of Transformation & Resources.

3.6 Appoints Stuart Green and James Hannah as independent co-opted members of Audit Committee for a term of office for a period of two years, with an extension to that term to be agreed by Council on the recommendation of the Executive Director of Transformation & Resources.

- 3.7 Delegates to the Monitoring Officer the responsibility to appoint members of committees on the nomination of their respective Group Leader.

4. Forward plan date and reason for urgency if applicable

Not Applicable

5. Background

- 5.1 Under the Local Government Act 2000 all of the functions of the Council are discharged by the Leader and Cabinet, unless they are reserved to the County Council by law, or by local arrangements under the 2000 Act and its subordinate legislation. The Local Government Act 1972 provides for the council functions to be discharged by Committee or Sub Committees appointed for that purpose or by officers of the council under delegated powers.
- 5.2 The constitution of the County Council envisages a number of committees to discharge the non- executive functions, and the Annual Meeting of the Council needs to approve the formation of and appoint members to those committees.
- 5.3 Members will be aware that committees of the Council must be proportionate according to the respective representation of the political groups on the County Council. In the case of Members who are not in a political group, the County Council can appoint Members directly to those committees, having regard to the proportionality rules. The custom and practice is for the County Council to appoint the Chair of each of those committees for the ensuing year.
- 5.4 Appendix A sets out the committees of the Council referred to in the constitution and which have been existence in the previous municipal year. It also provides for the size of committee, its proportionate membership and the nomination of the Chair of the committee which has been submitted by the Leader of the Council. The terms of reference for each of these committees are as set out in the Constitution.
- 5.5 Appendix B sets out the current working groups established by Council. It also provides for the size of working group, its proportionate membership, terms of reference and the nomination of the Chair which has been submitted by the Leader of the Council.
- 5.6 There is currently a vacancy for an independent Chair and 2 independent co-opted members of Audit Committee. A recruitment process has been undertaken by the Chair of Council, Cllr. Barry Flux, the Executive Director of Transformation and Resources, and the Director of Law and Corporate Governance. The 3 successful candidates are Peter Topping (Chair) and Stuart Green and James Hannah (co-opted members). All have been advised of their appointments subject to a decision of Council.

6. Options open to the Council and reasons for the recommendations

- 6.1 Agree to composition of the committees and working groups as per the appendices to this report.
- 6.2 Not agree the proposed composition.

- 6.3 Option 1 is the recommended option because without the establishment of committees and working groups, the non-executive functions of the Council would not be discharged.

7. Implications

Policy	None
Finance and value for money	Some Committee appointments and the independent Chair and co-opted members of Audit Committee attract a special responsibility allowance. The allowances vary depending on role and are detailed within the Member Allowance Scheme.
Legal	The report relates to functions set out in the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government Act 2000.
Procurement	None
Human resources	None
Property	None
The Equalities Act: is a full impact assessment required and attached?	None N/A
Risk assessment	None
Crime and disorder	None
Customer considerations	None
Carbon reduction	None
Health and wellbeing	None
Wards	(All Wards);

8. Background papers

Not Applicable

9. Links to other key reports already published

Not Applicable

10. Author and Contact Details

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