

TO: COUNCIL
11 JULY 2018

APPOINTMENTS TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS
Director of Resources – Democratic and Registration Services

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report clarifies the current position regarding the appointment of Members to serve on the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That Council agrees to waive the political balance requirements in order to confirm the appointment of Councillors Dudley, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle and McCracken as the Council's representatives on the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority until May 2019.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Subsequent to the Annual meeting it was drawn to the Council's attention that the six districts appointing to the Fire authority were required to review their appointments annually in accordance with political balance requirements and that it had not been made clear whether or not this had been done with reference to a Council minute.
- 3.2 Council is therefore being asked to confirm that it recognises that appointments to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority are subject to section 15 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 [political balance], and waives this requirement to endorse the appointment of three councillors from the same political group.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 Memberships to committees and external organisations were agreed at the Annual Council meeting on 23 May 2018. This included confirmation of the appointment of Councillors Dudley, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle and McCracken as the Council's representatives on the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority until May 2019. The Council is required to confirm the appointments annually.
- 5.2 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 introduced provisions in order to ensure that the political balance on committees reflects the political complexion of the Council. In order to achieve this the following principles must be observed as far as is reasonably practicable:
- (a) that not all seats on the committee are allocated to the same political group;
 - (b) that the majority of seats on each committee should be allocated to a particular political group if the number of members of the group is a majority of the authority's membership;

- (c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the total number of all seats allocated to each political group on ordinary committees should reflect the political balance of the Council; and
- (d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of seats on each committee allocated to each political group should reflect the political balance of the Council.

- 5.3 Appointments to the Fire Authority must be made in accordance with these principles. Whilst the Council explicitly waived the proportionality rules for a number of committees and sub-committees it did not do so for the Fire Authority.
- 5.4 The Conservative Group is the only political group on the Council. There is one Labour councillor on the Council however it requires two Members to form a Group; as a result Councillor Mrs Temperton is not entitled to a seat on the Fire Authority as of right. However to give effect to (a) above, one seat was offered to Councillor Mrs Temperton who indicated that she did not wish to take up the appointment. As a result the Conservative Group have taken all three seats.
- 5.5 Such a departure from the normal rules of proportionality is permitted by the Regulations if notice is given of the proposal in the agenda and if it is approved by the Council with no Member voting against the proposal. If any Member votes against the proposal then the normal proportionality rules will be applied and Councillor Mrs Temperton will have a seat on the Fire Authority and Council will be asked to confirm which of the current appointees will no longer have a seat.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 Nothing to add to the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 There are no additional revenue implications arising from the above recommendation.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Not relevant to this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Not relevant to this report.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Conservative Group and Councillor Mrs Temperton

Method of Consultation

7.2 Discussion

Representations Received

7.3 Outcome of discussions reflected in this report.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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