



**NORTHAMPTON  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Name of Committee**  
**COUNCIL**

**Directorate: Finance Governance and Citizens**

**Corporate Manager: Francis Fernandes**

**Date: 25 May 2006**

**Report Title**

**PROPORTIONALITY, COMMITTEE PLACINGS AND  
OTHER MATTERS**

**Key Decision**

**NO**

**1. Recommendations**

1. Council approves the number of seats on each Committee as outlined in this report.
2. Council approves the political make-up of each Committee (non proportional Improvement Board and Audit Committee) but proportionality Council wide maintained as far as practicable.
3. Council reaffirms the Leader and Deputy Leader appointments for the Council and each group as follows:-

**LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL.** That Councillor Hadland and Councillor Palethorpe be appointed Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council for the ensuing year.

**LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE MAIN OPPOSITION GROUP.** That Councillor Woods and Councillor Glynane be appointed Leader and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democratic Group.

**LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LABOUR GROUP.** That Councillor Barron and Councillor Marriott be appointed Leader and Deputy Leader of the Labour Group.

4. Council approves a six member Cabinet.

5. Council approves an increase in the number of seats on the Standards Committee by 2 (total 10).
6. Council approves the membership of the Cabinet and each Committee as outlined below.
7. Council appoints the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the Committees as indicated below.
  - (a) CABINET.  
Councillor Hadland (Leader); Councillor Palethorpe (Deputy-Leader); Councillors Caswell, Flavell, Larratt and Miah.
  - (b) IMPROVEMENT BOARD (6).  
Councillor Hadland (Chair); Councillor Palethorpe (Deputy-Chair); Councillor Caswell (substitute), Councillor Barron, Councillor Marriott, Councillor Evans (substitute), Councillor B Markham and Councillor Woods, Councillor Crake (substitute).
  - (c) AUDIT COMMITTEE (6).  
Councillor Patterson (Chair); Councillor Perkins (Deputy-Chair); Councillors Hope, McCutcheon, Stewart and Tavener.
  - (d) OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (14).  
Councillors Glynane (Chair); Councillor Roy (Deputy-Chair); Councillors Allen, Church, Eldred, Hill, M Hoare, B Hoare, Lane, Malpas, Mason, Massey, Pritchard and Simpson (Another Deputy-Chair to be determined).
  - (e) PLANNING COMMITTEE (12).  
Councillor Yates (Chair); Councillor Malpas (Deputy-Chair); Councillors Boss, Edwards, Hill, B Hoare, M Hoare, Hollis, McCutcheon, I Markham, Mason and Robinson.
  - (f) LICENSING COMMITTEE (15).  
Councillor Wire (Chair); Councillor Eldred (Deputy Chair); Councillors Acock, Beardsworth, Conroy, Duncan, Evans, Lane, J Lill, B Markham, Matthews, Patterson, Taverner, Taylor and Woods.
  - (g) TREE PANEL (3).  
Councillor Matthews (Chair) Councillor Lane (1 further Conservative to be nominated).
  - (h) STANDARDS COMMITTEE.  
Mrs M Roberts (Independent Chair); Mr J Romose (Independent Member); David Hughes (Parish Council Representative), Councillors Allen, Crake, Duncan, Edwards and Pritchard (2 Further Independent Members to be appointed).

## 8. CONSULTATION APPOINTMENTS.

To reaffirm the appointment of the following Councillors with whom consultations shall be held by the named Officer under the terms set out and delegated by the Council.

### Civic Matters

The Mayor, The Deputy-Mayor, Councillors Barron, Hadland, Palethorpe and Woods.

### Community Enabling Fund Advisory Panel

Councillors Boss, Hadland, Hill, I Markham, Matthews and Roy.

### Markets Matters

Councillors Hadland, Flavell, B Markham, Marriott, Taylor and Wire.

## 2. Summary

To invite Council to review representation and allocation of seats on its Committees, taking into account legal requirements and to elect the Leader and appoint the Cabinet.

## 3. Report Background

The Local Government and Housing Act 1989, requires the Council, at its annual meeting, or as "soon as practicable after the meeting" to review the representation of political groups and determine the allocation of seats (i.e. proportionality). The rights of the various political groups are specified in relevant regulations.

Last year as a result of the review of political structures the proportionality issue was delayed to the Council meeting on 29 September 2005, with some minor adjustments agreed at the meeting on 28 November 2005.

The present position is set out below.

### **Committees and Seats**

Improvement Board (6 Political Seats)

Audit Committee (6 Political Seats)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (14 Political Seats)

Tree Panel (3 Political Seats)

Licensing Committee (15 Political Seats)

## Planning (12 Political Seats)

The Council will have a total of 56 seats to which the **proportionality** rules apply. The allocations will be as follows: the Conservative group will have a total of 23 seats, the Liberal Democrat Group will have a total of 19 seats and the Labour Group will have a total of 13 seats.

Appointments for the Chairs and Deputy-Chairs need to be confirmed by Council except for the Chairs and Deputy-Chairs of Planning and Licensing Committees. In the case of those Committees it was decided as part of the Constitutional changes that the Chairs and Deputies would be appointed by the Committees on a formula basis (namely, the Deputy to become the Chair and a new Deputy to be appointed from the remaining group).

## THE COMMITTEES

### Improvement Board

Councillor Membership Total: 6

Political Make up

2 (Conservative)	2 (Liberal Democrat)	2 (Labour)	(Total 6)
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### Audit Committee

Councillor Membership: Total 6

Political Make up

2 (Conservative)	2 (Liberal Democrat)	2 (Labour)	(Total 6)
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### Overview and Scrutiny

Councillor Membership: Total 14

Political Make up

6 (Conservative)	5 (Liberal Democrat)	3 (Labour)	(Total 14)
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### Tree Panel

Councillor Membership: Total 3

Political Make up

2 (Conservative)	1 (Liberal Democrat)	0 (Labour)	(Total 3)
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## Regulatory Committees

### Licensing

Councillor Membership: Total 15

Political Make up

6 (Conservative)	6 (Liberal Democrat)	3 (Labour)	(Total 15)
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### Planning

Councillor Membership: Total 12

Political Make up

5 (Conservative)	4 (Liberal Democrat)	3 (Labour)	(Total 12)
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## Standards Committee

The political balance rules (proportionality) do not apply to the Standards Committee. Council is asked to approve an increase in the number of seats on the Standards Committee by 2 places for the following reasons. The Standards Board for England's view is that councils should have at least 2 parish representatives on Standards Committees. This is to "guard against problems .....that a member is unable to take part in a hearing due to a conflict of interest". Currently there is only 1 parish seat on the committee and it is proposed that one of the additional seats is used to increase the Parish Councillor representation.

Standards Board guidance also advises that independent members "should be members long enough for them to gain an understanding of the committee.....but not long enough that they lose their independence." The 2 independent members of Standards Committee were appointed in February 2002. Many local authorities interpret the Standards Board guidance as supporting an independent member appointment for 3 years . Whilst the Council's period of appointment has exceeded this, it is proposed that the status quo is maintained for a further year, particularly given the challenges facing the Council in terms of its recovery agenda, of which ethical standards is an important component. It is proposed that an additional independent member appointment is made to the committee with the aim of supporting continuity in the independent member representation when the current members stand down.

### **4. Options and Evaluation of Options**

On proportionality while numerous other permutations are possible, the allocation of seats as proposed accords with what has been agreed by the Groups and with legal requirements.

### **5. Resource Implications (including Financial Implications)**

The creation of two new independent member seats on Standards Committee may have a marginal effect on expense claims and will involve some advertising costs.

### **6. Risk and Opportunity Issues**

N/A.

**7. Consultees (Internal and External)**

<b>Internal</b>	
<b>External</b>	

**8. Compliance Issues**

**A: How Proposals Deliver Priority Outcomes**

<b>Recovery Plan</b>
Achieving appropriate political representation and structures is essential to recovery.
<b>Corporate Plan</b>
Effective decision making is critical in implementing the strategies within the Plan.

**B: Other Implications**

<b>Other Strategies</b>
N/A.

<b>Finance Comments</b>
An increase in the number of seats on the Standards Committee will result in a minor increase in the travel allowances for the additional members on the committee.

<b>Legal Comments</b>
Contained within the body of the report.

**9. Background Papers**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Source</b>
FJF file	Proportionality	Internal file
Standards Board for England Bulletin	Issue 28	Standards Board for England Bulletin
Guidance on Standards Committees	Local Authorities May 2002	Standards Board for England

**Jim Inch/Francis Fernandes**

Name	Signature	Date	Ext.
Author	J Inch/F Fernandes		
Corporate Manager	F Fernandes		
Director	Mario Abela		
Monitoring Officer or Deputy (Key decision only)			
Section 151 Officer or Deputy (Key decision only)			