

WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL

NOTES OF A MEETING OF THE SELECTION PANEL

HELD ON 18 MAY 2021 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES

Present: Councillor Simon Ashall
Councillor Ayesha Azad
Councillor Tahir Aziz
Councillor Ann-Marie Barker
Councillor Amanda Boote
Councillor Mary Bridgeman
Councillor Deborah Hughes
Councillor M Ilyas Raja

Peter Bryant
Julie Fisher
Frank Jeffrey

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

RESOLVED

That the Chief Executive, Julie Fisher, be elected Chairman of the Panel for the Municipal Year.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

No apologies for absence were received.

3. PROPORTIONALITY 2021/22.

The Panel had before it a report on proportionality of the Council.

State of the Political Groups		
Group	Members	Proportionality %
Conservative	13	43.3
Liberal Democrat	12	40.0
Labour	3	10
Independent	2	6.7

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

4. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES 2021/22.

The Panel considered the number of seats on the Committees and Sub-Committees that could be allocated to each political group in accordance with the proportionality rules.

It was noted that Claire Storey would continue in her role on the Council as the Independent Co-Opted Member and that Tim Stokes would continue in his position as the Council's Independent Person over the coming year.

The Members were advised that substitute Members for the Standards Hearings Sub-Committee were to be appointed, as agreed by the Standards and Audit Committee at its meeting in September 2020.

Following a discussion which explored the possibility of changing the size of a number of the Committees, the Members agreed to retain the current sizes of Committees and allocated the available seats in accordance with the proportionality figures.

RECOMMENDED to Council

That the proportions for each Committee be settled as follows:

	Total	Con	Lib Dem	Lab	Ind.	Ind. CoOpted Member
Appeals Cttee	3	1	1	1	-	-
Licensing Cttee	10	4	4	1	1	-
Overview & Scrutiny Cttee	9	4	4	1	-	-
Planning Cttee	9	4	3	1	1	-
Standards & Audit Cttee	6	2	2	-	1	1
Licensing Sub-Cttee A	3	1	1	-	1	-
Licensing Sub-Cttee B	3	1	1	1	-	-
Taxi Licensing Sub-Cttee	6	2	2	1	1	-
Standards Hearings Sub-Cttee	5	2	2	-	-	1
Woking Joint Cttee	7	3	3	1	-	-

5. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO WORKING GROUPS AND TASK GROUPS 2021/22.

The Members of the Panel were presented with a report on the current list of working groups under the remits of the Council, the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In considering the existing sizes of the Working Groups, the Members agreed to recommend to Council that the size of the Elections and Electoral Registration Review Panel should be increased to seven (from six) to ensure each Party was represented. It was further agreed that the Freedom of the Borough Working Group should be increased from six Councillors to seven Councillors and the Housing Infrastructure Fund Oversight Panel reduced in size from ten to seven Councillors.

An update was provided on the Military Covenant Advisory Panel and it was noted that the current Armed Forces Champion, John Kingsbury, had reported that the Advisory Panel had suggested that its membership should be increased from five Councillors to six Councillors, with the Armed Forces Champion to be a member of the Advisory Panel. Furthermore, the Advisory Panel Members had flagged up that the Panel's Terms of Reference had not been reviewed for a number of years, and had suggested that the document should be revisited. The changes would reflect the requests of the Advisory Panel Members, which included a change to the frequency of meetings from four a year to three a year.

The Members considered their nominations for the Military Covenant Advisory Panel and agreed to nominate five Councillors, rather than increase the membership as suggested by the existing Advisory Panel Members. In regard to the Terms of Reference, it was agreed that Officers would review the existing document and prepare an updated version for consideration by Council at its meeting on Monday, 24 May 2021.

In respect of the task groups within the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Members expressed a preference to increase the size of the Housing Task Group from seven to eight Councillors. The Council was to be recommended accordingly.

The Members of the Leisure Partnership Board had asked for consideration to be given to allow for substitute members to the Partnership Board to ensure that the Council was fully represented in the absence of an appointed Member. The Council was therefore to be recommended to agree to allow Members of the Leisure Partnership Board to nominate a substitute in the event of they were unable to attend a meeting of the Board.

RECOMMENDED to Council

- That (i) the size of the Elections and Electoral Registration Review Panel be increased to seven Councillors (from six);**
- (ii) the size of the Freedom of the Borough Working Group be increased to seven Councillors (from six);**
- (iii) the size of the Housing Infrastructure Fund Oversight Panel be reduced to seven Councillors (from ten);**
- (iv) the redrafted terms of reference of the Military Covenant Advisory Panel, as attached, be agreed;**
- (v) the size of the Housing Task Group be increased to eight**

Councillors (from seven);

(vi) Members of the Leisure Partnership Board be allowed to nominate a substitute in the event they were unable to attend a meeting of the Board; and

(vii) the proportions for each Group be settled as follows:

Council Appointed	Total	Con	Lib Dem	Lab	Ind.
Elections & Electoral Reg. Review Panel	7	3	2	1	1
Freedom of the Borough Working Group	7	3	2	1	1
Governance Review TG	6	2	2	1	1
Housing Infrastructure Fund Oversight Panel Group	7	3	3	1	-
Military Covenant Advisory Panel	5	2	2	1	-
Selection Panel	8	2	2	2	2
Sheerwater Regeneration Delivery & Oversight Board	7	3	3	1	-
Victoria Square Oversight Panel	9	4	3	1	1

Executive Appointed	Total	Con	Lib Dem	Lab	Ind.
Climate Change Working Group	6	2	2	1	1
Leisure Partnership Board	5	2	2	1	-
Local Development Framework Working Group	7	3	3	1	-

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Appointed	Total	Con	Lib Dem	Lab	Ind.
Economic Development Task Group	7	3	3	1	-
Finance Task Group	7	3	3	1	-
Housing Task Group	8	3	3	1	1

6. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO AD HOC BODIES 2021/22.

The Panel considered appointments of representatives to Ad Hoc Bodies and nominations

to the Surrey Leaders' Group. It was noted that the Surrey Leaders Group was seeking nominations from each of the Borough and District Authorities and that any Members put forward would need to complete a nomination form in order to be considered. No Members were proposed for the positions at the meeting, which included the High Sheriff's Award, the SCC Pension Fund and the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership.

It was further noted that the current Member Representative on Sport Woking, Councillor Ian Johnson, had advised that he had not been contacted by the Group in the past two years. Upon investigation, it had been confirmed that the Group continued to operate albeit on a significantly smaller scale than previously. The Council's Sports Development Officer had undertaken to review the position with the Group, with the aim of increasing its resilience and level of activity. In the meantime, it was recommended that the appointment of a Member representative for the coming year should be made.

In considering each of the appointments available, the Members of the Panel proposed that the number of appointments to the Woking Access Working Group should be increased from one to two Councillors from 2021 onwards. The change was accordingly recommended to Council.

RECOMMENDED to Council

That (i) the number of Member appointments to the Woking Access Group be increased to two Councillors (from one);

(ii) the proportions for each appointment be settled as follows:

Ad Hoc Body	Appointments (substitutes indicated in brackets)			
	Con	Lib Dem	Lab.	Ind.
Ashford & St Peters Hospital NHS Trust (1 rep, 3 years to 2022)		1		
Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Cttee (2 reps, 1 year plus 2 subs, 1 year)	1 (1)	1 (1)		
Corporate Trustee of Friends of Woking Palace (1 rep, 1 year).	1			
Countryside Partnership Board (1 rep, 1 year plus 1 sub, 1 year). Substitute to be appointed to the Local Liaison Group.	1	(1)		
Fairoaks Airport Consultative Cttee (1 rep., 1 year plus 1 sub, 1 year).	(1)	1		
Maybury Centre Trust (2 rep, four years to 2022 and 2023 respectively)	1 (2022)		1 (2023)	

National Parking Adjudications Service Joint Committee (1 rep, 2 years, plus substitute)	1	(1)		
Police and Crime Panel (1 rep, 1 year)		1		
ShopMobility (1 rep, 1 year plus 1 sub, 1 year)	(1)	1		
South East Employers (1 rep, 1 year plus 1 sub, 1 year)	1	(1)		
Sport Woking (formerly Woking Sports Council (2 reps, 1 year)	1	1		
Surrey County Playing Fields Assoc (1 rep, 1 year)	1			
Sutton Green Village Hall Management Cttee (2 reps, 1 year, 1 to be local Ward Councillor, 1 to be a Member of WBC)	1	1		
Woking Access Group (2 reps, 1 year)	1	1		
Woking Community Transport (2 observers, 1 year)	1	1		
Woking People of Faith (1 rep, five years to 2026)		1		
Woking Youth Council (2 reps, 1 year plus 1 substitute, 1 year)	1	1	(1)	

7. EX-OFFICIO APPOINTMENTS 2021/22.

The list of current Ex-Officio appointments was considered by the Panel. A number of the appointments for the coming year would be confirmed once the Portfolio positions had been filled.

Councillor Azad referred to the Ostensible Authority Standing Panel and invited Councillor Barker to sit on the Panel for the coming year. Councillor Barker advised that she would consider the offer and confirm whether she would take up the position in the coming days.

It was noted that Councillor Harlow would be appointed the Lead Member for the Sheerwater Regeneration scheme.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted

8. APPOINTMENT OF THE ARMED FORCES CHAMPION 2021/22.

The Members of Selection Panel were asked to recommend to Council the appointment of the Authority's Armed Forces Champion for 2021/22 together with a substitute Member. It was noted that the current representative was John Kingsbury with Councillor Will Forster acting as substitute. John Kingsbury had confirmed that he would like to be considered for the position in the coming year.

Councillor Barker proposed the appointment of Councillor Forster as the Authority's Armed Forces Champion and Councillor Boote offered to serve as Councillor Forster's substitute.

In considering the role, the Members felt that, although John Kingsbury had been in the role for a number of years, the position of Armed Forces Champion should be awarded to a serving Councillor. It was therefore agreed that the Council would be recommended to appoint Councillor Forster to the position, with Councillor Boote to act as substitute.

RECOMMENDED to Council

That (i) Councillor Forster be appointed the Council's Armed Forces Champion for 2021/22; and

(ii) Councillor Boote be appointed the substitute member for the Armed Forces Champion for 2021/22.

9. APPOINTMENT OF LEAD MEMBERS FOR ELECTED MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT 2021/22.

The Members of Selection Panel were invited to consider the appointment of Lead Members for Elected Member Learning and Development for the coming year. It was noted that a Member from each of the Political Groups had previously been appointed each year.

Councillor Elson, Councillor Leach and Councillor Raja were nominated on behalf of the Conservative Group, the Liberal Democrat Group and the Labour Group respectively. It was confirmed that the Independent Group would not make a nomination.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

That Councillor Elson, Councillor Leach and Councillor Raja be appointed as Lead Members for Elected Member Learning and Development for their respective Political Groups, with Councillor Elson to act as Lead Member for the Authority.

10. SEATING ARRANGEMENTS 2021/22.

The proposed seating plan for Council was discussed. Peter Bryant explained that a seating plan would be drawn up by Officers in accordance with the Government's current social distancing regulations. Provisions would be in place for Members to observe covid guidelines, with Members seated 1m+ apart in the Council Chamber, separated by screens. Members and Officers would be advised to take a Covid Lateral Flow Test ahead of the Council meeting. Members would be asked to keep their masks on throughout the Council

meetings, removing them only to speak. Furthermore, Members would be advised to remain seated when speaking at meetings of Council.

The arrangements would remain in place until such time that the Government removed the social distancing requirements, currently scheduled for 21 June 2021. Non statutory meetings would continue to be held over Zoom where possible, with many Councillors having expressed their support for the benefits online meetings brought.

The Members of the Panel welcomed the proposals.

RESOLVED

That the update on arrangements for Council and Committee meetings be noted.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Group Declarations

The Members of the Panel were reminded to submit their Group declarations by no later than the start of the Council meeting on Monday, 24 May 2021 to confirm the Group memberships, Leaders and Deputy Leaders.

Brookwood Cemetery Companies

Peter Bryant advised that, following Graham Cundy's retirement as a Borough Councillor, the Council would need to appoint a Member Director on the three Brookwood Cemetery Companies, a position previously held by Mr Cundy.

The Members were advised that ideally a nomination for the positions should be submitted to the meeting of Council on 24 May 2021. It was therefore agreed to recommend to Council that the posts be appointed to, with the name of the nominee to be confirmed at the meeting.

RECOMMENDED to Council

A Member Director be appointed to the three Brookwood Cemetery Companies, the name of the nominee to be confirmed at the meeting of Council on 24 May 2021.

Recommendations of Dr G Edila

Peter Bryant advised that Officers were preparing a report which would set out the progress achieved to-date and the implications of the recommendations adopted by the Council which had been made by the independent investigator brought in by the Council, Dr Gifty Edila. The report would be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive before being considered by Council at its meeting in July 2021.

Each Political Group was invited to nominate one or two Members to attend a one-off meeting with Officers to enable the Officers to explain the implications for the Council arising from Dr Edila's recommendations and outline the approach that would be taken in the Officer report. The meeting would be similar in style to Officers consulting Portfolio Holders

and Shadow Portfolio Holders on draft reports.

Peter advised the Group Leaders to contact him if they wished to take up the invitation before the report was published.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and ended at 9.15 pm