

NORTH YORKSHIRE POLICE, FIRE AND CRIME PANEL

20 July 2023

Review of the balanced appointment objective

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Panel on the latest position regarding political proportionality of the Panel's membership following recent appointments by the constituent authorities.
- 1.2 To recommend that no further adjustments are made to Panel membership for 2023/24;

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, Police (Fire) and Crime Panels ("Panels") are required to ensure that their membership reflects, as far as is practicable, both political and geographical proportionality, as well as necessary skills and experience. Specifically, local authority membership should represent all parts of the force area and "represent the political make-up of the relevant local authorities (when taken together)". A Panel should keep this under review and decide whether a variation in their numbers, by co-option, would assist in meeting what is referred to as "the balanced appointment objective".
- 2.2 Following the advent of Local Government Reorganisation in North Yorkshire on 1st April 2023 and further to the Panel appointments made in May 2023 by both North Yorkshire Council and City of York Council, it is timely that the Panel reviews the balanced appointment objective and considers whether any adjustment is needed.

3.0 CURRENT MEMBERSHIP POSITION

- 3.1 The Panel's core (statutory) elected membership is 10. Following formal agreement by both North Yorkshire Council and City of York Council in May 2023, the seat weighting between both authorities on the Panel has been adjusted in order to better reflect the balance of population across the force area. As such, North Yorkshire Council now has seven of the ten councillor appointments and City of York has three seats; the prior balance being represented as 8/2 between the councils of North Yorkshire and City of York.
- 3.2 Proportionality is calculated separately for the North Yorkshire Council seats on the Panel and for the City of York Council seats in order to best represent the political balance of those authorities, although there is currently only a very marginal differences in the overall result if Panel were to calculate on a combined picture across the force area.

3.3 The current make-up of the Panel is: **Conservative – 4; Labour – 3; Liberal Democrat – 2; NY Independent – 1**. These allocations provided the best representation of the entitlement in May 2023. There have been a few political changes within North Yorkshire Council since that time but these have had little effect on the group entitlements on the Panel and the below tables demonstrate the current position (as at 6 July 2023).

Fig. 1 Seat entitlement for City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council appointments to PFCP

City of York Council (Party)	Seat entitlement	Actual allocation
Conservative	0.19	0
Green	0.00	0
Independents (ungrouped)	0.06	0
Labour	1.53	2
Liberal	0.00	0
Liberal Democrat	1.21	1
York Independent Group	0.09	0
Total Panel Seats	3.00	3
North Yorkshire Council (Party)	Seat entitlement	Actual allocation
Conservative	3.73	4
Green	0.39	0
Independents (ungrouped)	0.39	0
Labour	0.86	1
Liberal	0.08	0
Liberal Democrat	0.93	1
North Yorkshire Independents	0.62	1
Total Panel Seats	7.00	7

3.4 While there are some slight variances between entitlement and allocation for some groups, these are fairly marginal and suggest that the Panel is currently in a robust position as regards meeting the objective on political proportionality grounds. It should be pointed out that the only means available to Panel for adjusting the balance would be either to seek an alternative appointment from a constituent authority or to apply to the Home Office for an additional (political) co-optation to the Panel which can often be a

lengthy process. In view of the arguably fair distribution of allocation highlighted in Figure 1, the Panel is not recommend to consider either of these options and is recommended to agree that it is satisfied with the current political position.

- 3.5 In terms of representing the geography of the area, the biggest challenge arguably lies with North Yorkshire Council, in ensuring that its allocations to the Panel provide for a fairly wide distribution across the North Yorkshire patch. The current membership provides representation across each of the parliamentary constituency areas located within North Yorkshire, with the exception of Skipton and Ripon. However, clearly North Yorkshire Panel Members would be able to put forward views and concerns local to that area if they arise and it's also intended that the North Yorkshire membership bring a strategic focus to issues affecting potentially a wider spread than their own constituency in any case.
- 3.6 Additionally, in view of the fact that the Panel has achieved a very robust political representation and has also provided for other important aspects within the balanced appointment objective – such as securing continuing expertise and knowledge – in addition to providing for a slightly better gender balance in its current membership, then the Panel may wish take the view that this matter is within tolerance for the time being as it meets the threshold for being “as far as is practicable” an arrangement.
- 3.7 As always, the balanced appointment objective will need to be reviewed periodically and certainly following elections and/or where new appointments are made by a constituent authority.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no significant legal implications arising from this report.

6.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no significant equalities implications arising from this report.

7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no significant climate change implications arising from this report.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That the Panel notes the update provided on the current position regarding political proportionality on the Panel;
- 8.2 That the Panel agrees that no further adjustments are required to the Panel's membership for 2023/24 in order to meet the balanced appointment objective.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.

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