

# North Yorkshire Council

## Full Council

12 November 2025

### Appointments to Committees According to Political Proportionality

#### Report of Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make recommendations for changes to the allocation of seats on and appointments to committees, subject to proportional representation due to recent political changes.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Recent changes to the political make-up of the Council has had an effect on proportional representation. These changes have occurred since the last proportionality report that came to Full Council on 16 July 2025.

#### 3.0 CHANGES SINCE THE LAST FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 16 JULY 2025.

- 3.1 The changes to the political make-up of the Council that have occurred since the last Full Council Meeting on 16 July 2025 due to 1 change of political party are as follows:

- Councillor Karl Arthur formally moved from the Conservative and Independents Group to the Reform UK Group on 16 October 2025.

- 3.2 The number of Councillors by political group and party is now as shown below:

Political Group/Party	Position in July 2025	Current Position	Overall Change
Conservatives and Independents	47	46	Loss of 1
Liberal Democrat and Liberals	14	14	No Change
Labour	10	10	No Change
NY Independents	7	7	No Change
Green and Independents	7	7	No Change
Independent (unaffiliated)	3	3	No Change
Reform UK	2	3	Gain of 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>	

- 3.3 Due to the above changes, the revised political proportionality calculation is attached at Appendix A, and suggested seat allocation at Appendix A1. As can be seen from this appendix there is a requirement for Reform UK to gain an additional 2 seats on Scrutiny Committees. The Conservative and Independents are over-represented by 5 seats on Scrutiny Committees due to the majority rule, see para 5.2, and all other political groups are under-represented on Scrutiny Committees. As such, it is suggested that the 2 seats come from the independent unaffiliated, which are treated as a group for the purposes of the proportionality calculation but are not a political group. At present, the unaffiliated independents have seats on the following Scrutiny Committees: Care and Independence; Corporate and Partnerships; and Scrutiny of Health.

3.4 The change in political balance means the number of seats on the Selby and Ainsty Area Planning Committee decreases the Conservative and Independents seat entitlement by 1 and increases the Reform UK entitlement to 1. Councillor Karl Arthur previously sat on the Selby and Ainsty Area Planning Committee in a Conservative and Independents seat. Councillor Arthur could therefore retain this seat as a Reform UK councillor. The Area Planning Committee Allocation for Selby and Ainsty is at Appendix B.

#### **4.0 ANALYSIS**

4.1 The total impact of these changes is detailed at Appendix A, which shows the purely mathematical proportionality basis for allocations. However, this calculation must comply with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as per paragraph 5.2 of this report.

#### **5.0 POLITICAL BALANCE GUIDANCE**

5.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 introduced a requirement that certain appointments should be proportionate to the political composition of the Council.

5.2 The Council or the Committee must give effect to principles set out in the statutory provisions. The principles are:

- 1) All the seats must not be allocated to the same political group
- 2) The majority of the seats must be allocated to the political group (if any) that holds the majority of seats on the Council
- 3) Subject to 1) and 2), in the case of ordinary committees, the number of seats on the ordinary committees which are allocated to each political group must bear the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Council.

5.3 Please note that “Ordinary Committees” of this Council are: Chief Officer Appointments and Disciplinary Committee; Employment Appeals Committee; Pension Fund Committee; Strategic Planning Committee; (Transport) Appeals Committee and Standards and Governance Committee.

5.4 Scrutiny committees and Audit are not “ordinary committees”.

5.5 This means that it is necessary to add up the total number of seats on all the ordinary committees. If a political group represents, for example, three quarters of the membership of the Council, it is entitled to three quarters of the total number of seats on all ordinary committees.

5.6 As a result, on some ordinary committees a political group may have more members than the application of the next principle would justify. It provides an allowance for the fact that calculating the proportion will not usually lead to whole numbers and so there will be rounding up and rounding down.

5.7 The duty on the Council is to give effect to these principles in *so far as is reasonably practicable*. This recognises that there cannot be an exact application of the rules.

5.8 Co-optees are not considered as part of calculating political balance except for any co-opted member with voting rights appointed to a committee with education functions under section 13(5) Local Government and Housing Act 1989 - see section 15 of that Act.

#### **6.0 ADDITIONAL LOCAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 It is established practice that every Councillor, who is not on the Executive, has a place on either an Overview and Scrutiny committee or on the Audit Committee, where practicable.
- 6.2 During the period of this Council it has been the established practice to allocate 1 seat on Scrutiny and Audit committees and 1 seat on Ordinary Committees to each of the unaffiliated Independents. This is practice rather than a legal requirement.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 In considering the proportionality calculations and analysis, it is recommended that the following changes be made to the allocation of seats on committees:
- Reform UK to gain an additional 2 seats on Scrutiny Committees from the unaffiliated independents. At present, the unaffiliated independents have seats on the following Scrutiny Committees: Care and Independence; Corporate and Partnerships; and Scrutiny of Health.
  - The Conservative and Independents seat entitlement on the Selby and Ainsty Area Planning Committee decreases by 1 and the Reform UK entitlement increases by 1.

## **8.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 introduced a requirement that certain appointments should be proportionate to the political composition of the Council and the Group need to consider a fair distribution of seats.
- 8.2 Alternative allocations could be made as long as they apply with the rules identified in paragraph 3.2. The proposals in paragraph 7.1 represents the application of these rules in so far as is reasonably practicable.

## **9.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no financial, legal, equalities or climate change implications arising from this report.

## **10.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 introduced a requirement that certain appointments should be proportionate to the political composition of the Council. The changes to the political balance that resulted from change to political parties necessitate a review of the proportional allocation of seats.

## **11.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the allocation of seats is undertaken in accordance with proportionality rules as follows:

- Reform UK to gain an additional 2 seats on Scrutiny Committees from the unaffiliated independents. At present, the unaffiliated independents have seats on the following Scrutiny Committees: Care and Independence; Corporate and Partnerships; and Scrutiny of Health.
- The Conservative and Independents seat entitlement on the Selby and Ainsty Area Planning Committee decreases by 1 and the Reform UK entitlement increases by 1.

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