

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

13 February 2026

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 12 November 2025.

3.0 CHANGES SINCE THE LAST FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 12 NOVEMBER 2025

- 3.1 The changes to the political make-up of the Council that have occurred since the last Full Council Meeting on 12 November 2025 due to changes of political group/party are as follows:

- Councillor John Mann formally moved from the Conservative and Independents Group to become an Unaffiliated Independent on 24 November 2025.
- Councillor Rich Maw formally moved from the Unaffiliated Independent Group to the Green and Independent Group on 8 December 2025.

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

Political Group/Party	As of 12.11.25	Current Position	Overall Change
Conservatives and Independents	46	45	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	8	Gain of 1
Independent (unaffiliated)	3	3	No Change
Reform UK	3	3	No Change
TOTAL	90	90	

- 3.3 Due to the above changes, a new political proportionality calculation has been completed and the updated seat allocation is attached at Appendix A.

- 3.4 The reduction of the number of Conservative and Independent councillors by one from 46 to 45 means that the Conservative and Independents no longer hold a majority. As such, the rule (see the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) whereby the majority of the seats must be allocated to the political group (if any) that holds the majority of seats on the Council, no longer applies. This then means that the Conservatives and Independents

lose 13 committee seats due to the purely mathematical application of proportionality, without the majority rule.

- 3.5 The 13 committee seats are then re-distributed in a way that corrects the historical anomalies that were caused by the previous application of the majority rule and which also takes into account Cllr John Mann moving from the Conservatives and Independents to become an Unaffiliated Independent, and Cllr Rich Maw moving from Unaffiliated Independent Group to the Green and Independent Group as below:

Political Group/Party	Changes on scrutiny committees	Changes on ordinary committees	Total number of seats 12.11.25	Current Position	Overall change
Conservative and Independents	-7	-6	118	105	-13
Liberal Democrat and Liberals	0	+1	32	33	+1
Labour	+1	0	23	24	+1
NY Independent	+1	+1	14	16	+2
Green and Independents	+2	+2	14	18	+4
Unaffiliated Independent (aggregated)	+3	+2	2	7	+5
Reform UK	0	0	7	7	0
Total			210	210	

3.6 Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Planning Committee

The allocation of seats on the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Planning Committee, as per the 12 November 2025 meeting of Full Council is as below:

Group	Number of councillors in the area	Proportionality based upon 7 members	Number of committee seats
Conservative and Independents	4	2.15	2
Liberal Democrats and Liberals	7	3.77	4
Labour	0	0.00	0
Green and Independents	2	1.08	1
NY Independent	0	0.00	0
Reform UK	0	0.00	0
Independent unaffiliated	0	0.00	0
Total	13	7.00	7

The allocation of seats on the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Planning Committee following the moved of Cllr John Mann from the Conservative and Independents Group to become an Unaffiliated Independent on 24 November 2025 is as below:

Group	Number of councillors in the area	Proportionality based upon 7 members	Updated allocation of seats (rounded)
Conservative and Independents	3	1.62	2
Liberal Democrats and Liberals	7	3.77	4
Labour	0	0.00	0
Green and Independents	2	1.08	1
NY Independent	0	0.00	0
Reform UK	0	0.00	0
Independent Unaffiliated	1	0.54	1
Total	13	7.00	8

3.7 The practice of rounding up and rounding down the mathematical proportionality calculation means that there are 8 seats through proportionality but only 7 seats on the committee. One of the political groups may wish to give up a seat to the Unaffiliated Independents or it could be decided by Council that the Unaffiliated Independents are not allocated a seat as their proportionate share is the lowest of all groups with representatives on the committee.

3.8 **Scarborough and Whitby Area Planning Committee**

The current allocation of seats on the Scarborough and Whitby Area Planning Committee, as per the 12 November 2025 meeting of Full Council is as below:

Group	Number of councillors in the area	Proportionality based upon 7 members	Number of committee seats
Conservative and Independents	7	3.27	3
Liberal Democrats and Liberals	0	0.00	0
Labour	5	2.33	2
Green and Independents	0	0.00	0
NY Independent	1	0.47	1
Reform UK	1	0.47	0
Unaffiliated Independent	1	0.47	1
Total	15	7.00	7

The allocation of seats on the Scarborough and Whitby Area Planning Committee is affected by the move of Cllr Rich Maw from the Unaffiliated Independents to become a Green and Independent on 8 December 2025 is as below:

Group	Number of councillors in the area	Proportionality based upon 7 members	Updated allocation of seats (rounded)
Conservative and Independents	7	3.27	3
Liberal Democrats and Liberals	0	0.00	0
Labour	5	2.33	2
Green and Independents	1	0.47	0
NY Independent	1	0.47	0
Reform UK	1	0.47	0
Unaffiliated Independent	0	0.00	0
Total	15	7.00	7

3.9 The practice of rounding up and rounding down the mathematical proportionality calculation means that the Green and Independent Group, North Yorkshire Independent and Reform UK are each entitled to 0.47%. A seat was previously held by Cllr Maw as the Unaffiliated Independent representative. It needs to be decided across the 3 groups where the 2 seats are allocated.

4.0 MAJOR OUTSIDE BODIES

4.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires political proportionality to be applied to all outside bodies where the Council appoints three or more representatives. For North Yorkshire Council, this includes: the Police Fire and Crime Panel; the North York Moors National Park Authority; and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority.

Police Fire and Crime Panel

4.2 The allocation of seats on the Police Fire and Crime Panel is affected by the moves of Cllr John Mann from the Conservative and Independents Group to become an Unaffiliated Independent on 24 November 2025 and Cllr Rich Maw from an Unaffiliated Independent to the Green and Independent Group. The following table shows the allocation of seats prior to the move:

Group	Number of councillors	Proportionality based on 7 members	Number of committee seats
Conservative and Independents	46	3.58	4
Liberal Democrats and Liberals	14	1.09	1
Labour	10	0.78	1
Green and Independents	7	0.54	1
NY Independent	7	0.54	0
Reform UK	3	0.23	0
Unaffiliated Independent	3	0.23	0
Total	90	7.00	7

The table below shows the allocation of seats following the move:

Group	No of councillors	Proportionality based on 7 members	Updated allocation of committee seats (rounded)
Conservative and Independents	45	3.50	4
Liberal Democrats and Liberals	14	1.09	1
Labour	10	0.78	1
Green and Independents	8	0.62	1
NY Independent	7	0.54	0
Reform UK	3	0.23	0
Independent ~Unaffiliated	3	0.23	0
Total	90	7.00	7

4.3 This means the Green and Independents Group have the higher proportionality percentage and are now entitled to the seat that was allocated to them following the resignation of the North Yorkshire Independent incumbent, Cllr Lindsay Burr, at Full Council on 12 November 2025.

4.4 The councillors currently appointed to the Police Fire and Crime Panel are as follows:

Conservative and Independents (4)

Cllr P Wilkinson

Cllr T Grogan

Cllr H Moorhouse

Cllr D Chance

Labour (1)

Cllr S Shaw-Wright

Liberal Democrats and Liberals (1)

Cllr C Aldred

Green and Independents (1)

Cllr K Foster

4.5 North York Moors National Park Authority

The allocation of seats on the North York Moors National Park Authority (NYMNPA) is unaffected by the move of Cllr John Mann from the Conservative and Independents Group to become an unaffiliated independent on 24 November 2025 and Cllr Rich Maw from an Unaffiliated Independent to the Green and Independent Group. The following table shows the allocation of seats prior to the move:

Group	Number of councillors	Proportionality based on 9 members	Number of committee seats
Conservative and Independents	46	4.6	5
Liberal Democrats and Liberals	14	1.40	1
Labour	10	1.0	1
Green and Independents	7	0.70	1
NY Independent	7	0.70	1
Reform UK	3	0.30	0
Unaffiliated Independent	3	0.30	0
Total	90	9	9

The table below shows the allocation of seats following the move:

Group	Number of councillors	Proportionality based on 9 members	Updated allocation of committee seats (rounded)
Conservative and Independents	45	4.50	5
Liberal Democrats and Liberals	14	1.40	1
Labour	10	1.0	1
Green and Independents	8	0.80	1
NY Independent	7	0.70	1
Reform UK	3	0.30	0
Unaffiliated Independent	3	0.30	0
Total	90	9	9

4.6 The councillors currently appointed to the NYMNPA are as follows:

Conservative and Independents (5)

Cllr D Jeffels
 Cllr H Moorhouse
 Cllr C Pearson
 Cllr G Jabbour
 Cllr D Hugill

Labour (1)

Cllr J Ritchie

Liberal Democrats and Liberals (1)

Cllr J Andrews

Green and Independents (1)

Cllr A Warneken

Unaffiliated Independents (1) – this is a NY Independent seat that has been gifted.

Cllr M Donohue-Moncrieff

4.7 Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

The allocation of seats on the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) is affected by the move of Cllr John Mann from the Conservative and Independents Group to become an unaffiliated independent on 24 November 2025 and Cllr Rich Maw from an Unaffiliated Independent to the Green and Independent Group. The following table shows the allocation of seats prior to the move:

Group	No of councillors	Proportionality based on 10 members	Number of committee seats
Conservative and Independents	46	5.11	6
Liberal Democrats and Liberals	14	1.56	1
Labour	10	1.11	1
Green and Independents	7	0.78	1
NY Independent	7	0.78	1
Reform UK	3	0.33	0

Unaffiliated Independent	3	0.33	0
Total	90	10.00	10

The table below shows the allocation of seats following the move:

Group	No of councillors	Proportionality based on 10 members	Updated allocation of committee seats (rounded)
Conservative and Independents	45	5.00	5
Liberal Democrats and Liberals	14	1.56	2
Labour	10	1.11	1
Green and Independents	8	0.89	1
NY Independent	7	0.78	1
Reform UK	3	0.33	0
Unaffiliated Independent	3	0.33	0
Total	90	10.00	10

The Conservatives and Independents lose one seat and the Liberal Democrats and Liberals gain one seat.

4.8 The councillors currently appointed to the YDNPA are as follows:

Conservative and Independents (6)

Cllr R Foster
Cllr D Ireton
Cllr Y Peacock
Cllr K Sedgwick
Cllr S Myers
Cllr R Heseltine

Labour (1)

Cllr S Shaw-Wright

Liberal Democrats and Liberals (1)

Cllr A Murday

Green and Independents (1)

Cllr D Noland

North Yorkshire Independent (1)

Cllr S Parsons

5.0 ANALYSIS

5.1 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 section 6.0 of this report.

6.0 POLITICAL BALANCE GUIDANCE

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

- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 Please note that “Ordinary Committees” of this Council are: Chief Officer Appointments and Disciplinary Committee; Employment Appeals Committee; Pension Fund Committee; Development Plan Committee; Strategic Planning Committee; (Transport) Appeals Committee; Standards and Governance Committee; and the General Licensing and Registration Committee.
- 6.4 Scrutiny committees and the Audit Committee are not “ordinary committees”.
- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 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.
- 6.7 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.
- 6.8 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.

7.0 ADDITIONAL LOCAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 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.

8.0 SUMMARY

- 8.1 The impact of the moves of Cllr John Mann from the Conservative and Independents Group to become an Unaffiliated Independent on 24 November 2025 and Councillor Rich Maw's move from the Unaffiliated Independent Group to the Green and Independent Group on 8 December 2025 is summarised as below:
- Conservative and Independents lose 13 seats on scrutiny (-7) and ordinary committees (-6)
 - Liberal Democrats and Liberals gain 1 seat on ordinary committees

- Labour gain 1 seat on scrutiny committees
- North Yorkshire Independents gain 1 seat on scrutiny committees and 1 seat on ordinary committees
- Green and Independents gain 2 seats on scrutiny committees and 2 seats on ordinary committees
- Unaffiliated Independent gain 3 seats on scrutiny committees and 2 seats on ordinary committees (when treated as a political group as opposed to 3 individuals)
- On the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Planning Committee, one of the political groups may wish to give up a seat to the Unaffiliated Independents or it could be decided that the Unaffiliated Independents are not allocated a seat as their proportionate share is the lowest of all groups with representatives on the committee
- On the Scarborough and Whitby Area Planning Committee, there are 2 seats to allocate and the Green and Independent group, North Yorkshire Independent and Reform UK are each entitled to 0.47% of a seat under proportionality. As such, it needs to be decided across the 3 groups how those 2 seats are allocated.
- The Conservatives and Independents lose 1 seat on the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and the Liberal Democrats and Liberals gain 1 seat
- The Green and Independents Group are now entitled to the seat that was previously gifted to them by the North Yorkshire Independents on the Police Fire and Crime Panel.

9.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 Alternative allocations could be made as long as they apply with the rules identified in section 6.0. The proposals in paragraph 8.1 represents the application of these rules in so far as is reasonably practicable.

10.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 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.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

In considering the proportionality calculations and analysis, it is recommended that the following changes be made to the allocation of seats on committees in accordance with proportionality rules as follows:

- Conservative and Independents lose 13 seats on scrutiny (-7) and ordinary committees (-6)
- Liberal Democrats and Liberals gain 1 seat on ordinary committees
- Labour gain 1 seat on scrutiny committees
- North Yorkshire Independents gain 1 seat on scrutiny committees and 1 seat on ordinary committees
- Green and Independents gain 2 seats on scrutiny committees and 2 seats on ordinary committees

- Unaffiliated Independent gain 3 seats on scrutiny committees and 2 seats on ordinary committees (when treated as a political group as opposed to 3 individuals)
- On the Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Planning Committee, one of the political groups may wish to give up a seat to the Unaffiliated Independents or it could be decided that the Unaffiliated Independents are not allocated a seat as their proportionate share is the lowest of all groups with representatives on the committee
- On the Scarborough and Whitby Area Planning Committee, there are 2 seats to allocate and the Green and Independent Group, North Yorkshire Independents and Reform UK are each entitled to 0.47% of a seat under proportionality. As such, it needs to be decided across the 3 groups how those 2 seats are allocated.
- The Conservatives and Independents lose 1 seat on the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and the Liberal Democrats and Liberals gain 1 seat
- The Green and Independents Group are now entitled to the seat that was previously gifted to them by the North Yorkshire Independents on the Police Fire and Crime Panel.

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