

**Open Report on behalf of David O'Connor, Executive Director Performance and Governance**

Report to:	<b>County Council</b>
Date:	<b>20 May 2011</b>
Subject:	<b>Committee Structure, Political Balance on Committees and Sub-Committees and Allocation of Places</b>

**Summary:**

This report seeks approval for membership of the County Council's Pensions Committee to be reduced from 19 to 11, and for the resultant changes in the proportional entitlement, as set out in Appendix A, to be approved.

**Recommendation(s):**

- 1) That the County Council reduces the number of members on its Pensions Committee from 19 to 11.
- 2) That the allocation of seats on committees, sub-committees and other bodies between political groups, as set out in Appendix A, be approved.
- 3) That the making of appointments to committees, sub-committees and those other bodies be carried out by the Chief Executive, in accordance with the wishes of Group Leaders, Deputy Group Leaders and Group Whips, pursuant to his delegated powers.
- 4) That, in relation to (1) above, the Council's Constitution be amended accordingly.

**1. Background**

1.1 Under the Council's Constitution the functions of the full Council include deciding on the composition of Committees and making appointments to them.

1.2 There is no proposal to amend the basic committee structure. The only change proposed in this paper is a reduction from 19 members to 11 members on the Pensions Committee.

1.3 The County Council's Pensions Committee responsible for administering the Local Government Pension Scheme, currently has a membership of 19 (15 elected members and four co-optees).

1.4 Best practice suggests a lower number of members on Pensions Committees. It is therefore considered that a more appropriate number for Lincolnshire would be 11 members (eight elected members and three co-optees).

1.5 This change, while reducing the membership, would allow representation of key stakeholders to be retained through co-opted members.

1.6 The County Council is required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to review the allocation of seats to political groups on committees and sub-committees.

1.7 Attached at Appendix A is the proposed allocation of seats to political groups, reflecting the suggested change to membership of the Pensions Committee. The allocation proposed to each of the committees does ensure that each committee is politically balanced, so far as is reasonably practicable, given the number of seats on each committee and that the membership of council bodies overall reflects the proportion of seats held by each group on the Council. The appointment of members of the Council to the Standards Committee is not covered by the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

1.6 It is a statutory requirement that each committee or other body that deals with education matters has appointed to it at least five church and parent governor representatives. In order to meet the statutory requirements within the political management structure, these additional members will be invited to meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee when they are considering education matters.

## **2. Conclusion**

Appendix A demonstrates how the proposals for political balance have been calculated should the membership of the Pensions Committee be reduced from 19 to 11. Decisions on the composition of committees, sub-committees, groups and panels, and the making of appointments to them are within the remit of the full Council.

### **3. Legal Comments:**

The Council's Constitution provides that it is a function of the Council to agree the composition of Committees, Sub-Committees, Groups and Panels and this includes the allocation of seats to Political Groups. The Council must in allocating seats ensure that the overall allocation of all seats reflects the political balance of the Council.

The Council is also required to appoint members to the allocated seats on its Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels and Groups in accordance with the wishes of the Political Groups. This can be done by full Council or the Constitution provides for it to be done by the Chief Executive in accordance with nominations received from each Group Leader Deputy Group Leader and Group Whip.

#### **4. Resource Comments:**

There are no material financial implications arising from the acceptance of the recommendations in this report.

#### **5. Consultation**

**a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?**

n/a

**b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?**

Yes

**c) Scrutiny Comments**

n/a

**d) Policy Proofing Actions Required**

n/a

#### **6. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Allocation of seats to political groups.

#### **7. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Nigel West, who can be contacted on 01522 552840 or [nigel.west@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.west@lincolnshire.gov.uk).