

## North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

16 May 2019

### Balanced appointment objective: review of Panel membership

#### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide an update on the political proportionality of the Panel following the recent district elections;
- 1.2 To ask members to consider the impact upon achieving the balanced appointment objective.

#### **2 Background**

- 2.1 Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, Police and Crime Panels are required to ensure that their membership reflects, as far as is practical, 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 The Panel’s core elected membership is 10; one each appointed by NYCC and the seven local councils within North Yorkshire, plus two from the City of York Council. Prior to the recent district council elections, the political balance of the Panel was as follows: Conservative – 7 seats; Labour – 1 seat; Liberal Democrat – 1 seat; Independent – 1 seat. The Panel is required to review the impact of local and County elections on the agreed allocation of seats, after these have taken place.

#### **3 District Council elections – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019**

- 3.1 Within the force area, council elections were held in all districts, plus City of York, with the exception of Harrogate district. As a consequence of councillors either not standing in these elections or losing seats, there are currently vacancies on the Panel for the following areas:
  - (a) City of York Council – previously a Conservative appointment;
  - (b) Richmondshire District Council – previously an Independent appointment;
  - (c) Ryedale District Council – previously a Conservative appointment;
  - (d) Scarborough Borough Council - previously a Conservative appointment;
  - (d) Selby District Council - previously a Conservative appointment.

- 3.2 Many of the district councils and City of York will also be considering their appointments to the Panel as part of their annual meetings around end of May 2019, which may result in further changes in membership.
- 3.3 While the Panel cannot determine the political party of the appointee submitted to take up a local seat, the Panel does have a responsibility to consider how elections have impacted on proportionality and whether any measures need to be taken to help achieve greater balance. .
- 3.4 Seat allocation to the Panel is calculated according to the current proportionality of all elected members across the North Yorkshire and York force area. As such the following table highlights current membership to the Panel (“Actual”) according to political affiliation, as a result of the recent elections. This is set alongside the statistical allocation of seats according to proportionality of all the elected Members across the force area (“Seats entitlement”).

Party	Actual	Seats entitlement	Difference
Conservative	7	5.20	1.80
Liberal Democrat	1	1.09	0.09
Labour	1	1.32	0.32
Liberal	0	0.14	0.14
Green	0	0.26	0.26
UKIP	0	0.03	0.03
Independents	1	1.84	0.84
Yorkshire Party	0	0.11	0.11

- 3.5 Members will note that the most significant discrepancies between actual allocations and seat entitlements are for the Conservative Party and Independent seats. When last reviewed by the Panel in 2018, the Independents entitlement sat at under 1.4 and it was agreed that this was broadly within tolerance. However, the political balance is such at the current time that the Panel is invited to consider where adjustments to its membership could more robustly reflect this.
- 3.6 For example, the following two options would bring about greater balance.

***a) reduce the Conservative seats on the Panel to 6 and increase the Independent seats to 2.***

As illustrated below, this would bring about a much more balanced make-up, with only very minor discrepancies.

Party	Actual	Seats entitlement	Difference
Conservative	6	5.20	0.80
Liberal Democrat	1	1.09	0.09
Labour	1	1.32	0.32

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Liberal	0	0.14	0.14
Green	0	0.26	0.26
UKIP	0	0.03	0.03
Independents	2	1.84	0.16
Yorkshire Party	0	0.11	0.11

***b) retain the current Panel membership and co-opt an additional Independent member***

There still remains a significant discrepancy (more than one seat variation) for the Conservative Party entitlement in this model, as shown below. It should also be highlighted that co-opting an additional elected Member to the Panel involves seeking approval from the Secretary of State.

Party	Actual	Seats entitlement	Difference
Conservative	7	5.72	1.28
Liberal Democrat	1	1.20	0.20
Labour	1	1.45	0.45
Liberal	0	0.16	0.16
Green	0	0.28	0.28
UKIP	0	0.03	0.03
Independents	2	2.02	0.02
Yorkshire Party	0	0.13	0.13

- 3.7 Based on the above illustrations it would seem that the model which would achieve the most balance for the Panel is that in example a). The Panel cannot determine which appointments are made by the constituent authorities and it may be end of May before there is further clarity on appointments made. At this stage then the Panel is asked to simply note the update, consider the impact that particular adjustments may make and return to reviewing this matter once confirmation of appointments for the current vacancies have been provided.

#### **4 Recommendation**

4.1 That the Panel:

- (a) notes the update provided on political proportionality of the Panel following the recent local elections; and
- (b) agrees to review this matter again once appointments have been confirmed by the constituent authorities.

Diane Parsons  
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8<sup>th</sup> May 2019