

LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERSHIP

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the proposal for Nottingham City Council to have additional co-opted members on the Panel, in order to achieve a more balanced membership that reflects the geographical and political make-up of the force area.

Information and Advice

Current Local Authority Membership

2. The Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011 specifies that Police and Crime Panels must represent all parts of the police force area, be politically balanced and that members should have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary.
3. In Nottinghamshire the Panel has 10 elected members. There is also requirement to co-op 2 non- political independent members and the ability, subject to the agreement of the Secretary of State to co-opt an additional 8 members. The maximum size of any Panel is therefore 20.
4. Currently the composition of the Panel is 1 member per authority, with 2 from the City.
5. The Home Office had to be notified by 16th July 2012 of the Panel arrangements and Councillor appointments to the Panel. Council appointments have now been confirmed as follows:-

Panel member name	Local Authority	Political representation
1. Cllr T Roberts MBE	Newark & Sherwood	Conservative
2. Cllr John Knight	Ashfield	Labour
3. Cllr David Challinor	Bassetlaw	Labour
4. Cllr Pat Lally	Broxtowe	Labour
5. Cllr John Clarke	Gedling	Labour
6. Tony Eggington	Mansfield	Executive Mayor
7. Cllr J Fearon	Rushcliffe	Conservative
8. Cllr Eric Kerry	Notts County Council	Conservative
9. Cllr Jon Collins	Nottingham City Council	Labour
10. Cllr Alex Norris	Nottingham City Council	Labour

Representing the Force Area

6. In areas in which there are both unitary and counties/ districts there could be a perceived in- balance in the geographical representation on the Panel due to the

requirement that each Authority in the Force area must be represented by at least 1 member. This situation has been recognised to some extent by the allocation of an additional seat on the Panel to the City Council.

7. There is a request to consider whether the City Council should be allocated further seats through the use of councillor co-options. This would have an impact on the political balance and would require the unanimous agreement of all Panel Members and the Secretary of State.
8. This issue was discussed at the Nottinghamshire Leaders Meeting (a group made up of the Leaders and Chief Executives of the City, County and all Borough and District Councils within Nottinghamshire) on 20th June and 13th July 2012. At the July meeting it was agreed that everyone would use their best endeavour to ensure that the Panel would have an additional 2 City Councillors on the Panel, making a total of 4 overall.
9. Councillor Graham Chapman, The Deputy Leader of the City Council, wrote to Members of the Nottinghamshire Leaders Group on 21 September 2012 about this issue (see Appendix 1).

Duty to Produce a Balanced Panel

10. Paragraph 31 of Part 4, Schedule 6 of The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 outlines the duty to produce a balanced panel.
11. The Home Office produced advice on the balanced appointment objective in March 2012 (see Appendix 2 – extract from Local Government Association guidance - 'Police and crime panels – Panel arrangements and the balanced appointment objective').
12. This advice underlines that "Councillor membership of the panel should "reflect the geography and population size of the force area" and "(when taken together) should reflect the political balance of the force area". The advice clarifies that local authorities could look to achieve political balance in the first instance by considering the proportion of councillors from each political party across the Force area. This approach is the closest to the spirit of the legislation and reflects the approach taken to Police Authority membership.
13. It should be noted that under the legislation the Mayor of Mansfield must be nominated from that authority.
14. The political make-up of the Panel at present with 10 Members is as follows:-

6 Labour	5.01%
3 Conservative	3.31%
1 Independent	0.89%
0 Liberal Democrat	0.79%

The percentage proportions required to enable political balance is as follows:-

5.01%	Labour
3.31%	Conservative
0.89%	Independent
0.79%	Liberal Democrat

15. Guidance from the Local Government Association suggests that the ability to co-opt additional Councillors on to the Panel could be used to achieve political balance.
16. The Panel needs to consider how the balanced appointment objective can be most effectively met. It will be the responsibility of each authority to ensure that the member appointed has the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience for their role on the Panel.

Other Options Considered

17. To retain the existing number of Local Authority members. It is felt that this would not reflect the geographical and political make-up of the force area as required by the Home Office.

Reasons for Recommendation/s

18. To enable the Panel to consider how the balanced appointment objective can be most effectively met.
19. If it is agreed that further Councillors from Nottingham City Council should be co-opted to the Panel, then the Secretary of State needs to be notified of the Panel's reasons as to why this would enable the balanced appointment objective to be met or more effectively met.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That consideration be given to the co-option of additional local authority members from Nottingham City Council, subject to approval by the Secretary of State.

Background Papers and Published Documents

- 1) Notes of Leaders Meeting – 13 July 2012
- 2) Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (published)
- 3) The Police and Crime Panel (Nominations, Appointments and Notifications) Regulations 2012 (published)
- 4) 'Police and crime panels – Guidance on role and composition' – Local Government Association – 2011 (published)
- 5) 'Police and crime panels – Panel arrangements and the balanced appointment objective' – Local Government Association – 2012 (published)

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