

Report title: Co-option of Members to achieve the Balanced Appointment Objective	
Report to: Essex Police, Fire and Crime Panel	
Report author: Emma Tombs, Democratic Services Manager	
Date: 28 September 2023	For: Decision
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County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update the Panel on the proposed nominees received from the Essex Labour Group and Essex Conservative Group for the balanced appointment co-options to the Panel and recommendation that the Panel make the necessary appointments.

2. Background

- 2.1 Schedule 6 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 sets out the composition of the Panel, which includes the 'balanced appointment objective'.

31. (5) The "balanced appointment objective" referred to in this paragraph is the objective that local authority members of a police and crime panel (when taken together)—

 - (a) represent all parts of the relevant police area;*
 - (b) represent the political make-up of—*
 - (i) the relevant local authority, or*
 - (ii) the relevant local authorities (when taken together)*
 - (c) have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for the police and crime panel to discharge its functions effectively.*
- 2.2 At its meeting of 20 July 2023, the Panel received a report advising that the political composition of the Panel did not reflect the overall political composition of the fifteen constituent councils within the County. This was due to changes resulting from the elections held in May 2023.
- 2.3 The report set out that for the balanced appointment objective to be better achieved, the composition of the Panel would need to include one further Labour member and one further Conservative member over and above those members already appointed by the constituent councils.
- 2.4 The Panel therefore resolved:

- *That officers request one nomination each from the Essex Labour Group and the Essex Conservative Group.*
- *That a further report to the Panel be made as soon as these nominations have been received so the nominees identified can be co-opted to the Panel.*

3. Activity since the 20 July 2023 meeting

- 3.1 As agreed by the Panel, the Essex Labour Group and the Essex Conservative Group were each invited to put forward their respective nominees. These were confirmed as:

Labour – Councillor Aidan McGurran (A member of ECC)

Conservative – Councillor Frankie Ricci (A member of Braintree DC)

- 3.2 The co-options for 2023 represents a change from the previous position which was for an additional Labour member and Liberal Democrat member. The current co-optees are Cllr Aidan McGurran (Labour) and Cllr Jude Deakin (Liberal Democrat) and they have remained in place during this review process. However, if the Panel agrees to co-opt the nominees identified in this report, the current Liberal Democrat co-optee, Cllr Jude Deakin, will cease to be a member of the Panel.

- 3.3 Permission was previously sought in 2022 from the Home Office to make co-options. A response was subsequently received from the Home Office confirming that the Panel was able to make this adjustment each year, as required, without further formal application to the Minister.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 That the co-opted members of the panel to achieve the balanced appointment objective are with immediate effect Councillor Aidan McGurran (Labour) and Councillor Frankie Ricci (Conservative)
- 4.2 That the co-options remain in place until co-options for the 2024-25 year are made.
- 4.3 Note that Cllr Jude Deakin has ceased to be a member of the Panel.