

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: 29 September 2022	For: Decision
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County Divisions affected: All Essex	

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update the Panel on the response received from the Home Office in relation to achieving the Balanced Appointment Objective and recommend 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 23 June 2022, 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 2022.
- 2.3 The report set out that for the balanced appointment objective to be achieved the composition of the Panel would need to include one further Labour member and one further Liberal Democrat member over and above those members already appointed by the constituent councils.
- 2.4 The Panel therefore resolved:
 1. *The Panel applies to the Home Secretary for permission to co-opt one Labour Member and one Liberal Democrat Member for one year.*

2. *The Labour Group and the Liberal Democrat Groups each be invited to put forward suitable nominations to fill these posts in the event that permission is granted.*

3. *That a report be brought back to the Panel as soon as we have heard from the Home Secretary.*

3. Activity since the 23 June 2022 meeting

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

Labour – Councillor Aidan McGurran
Liberal Democrat – Councillor Jude Deakin

- 3.2 Permission was sought from the Home Office to make these co-options, which was subsequently received.
- 3.3 The Home Office additionally confirmed that in subsequent years the Panel would be able to make the co-options needed to achieve political balance without needing to make further applications to do so. This represents a change from the previous position which was that we had to seek permission any time the configuration changed.

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 Jude Deakin (Liberal Democrat).
- 4.2 That the co-options remain in place until a further report is received by the Panel as soon as practicable after the elections held in May 2023, ideally at the Annual Meeting of the Panel, in order to make any co-options that may be needed to achieve political balance at that time.