



East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Extraordinary Council Meeting

11 December 2024

**Agenda
and Recommendations**

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR VISITORS TO THE GRANGE

Parking

Limited visitor parking is available during the daytime at the access area to The Grange, for people making short visits on Council business of up to 30 minutes. Ample free public car parking is available nearby for longer visits and location plans can be forwarded on request. On-site car parking is available for evening meetings after 5.00pm.

Access and Security

If you are visiting The Grange during normal office hours you should report to the main reception desk, where you will be asked to fill in a visitor's pass that must be worn at all times whilst you are in the building. Please remember to return your pass before you leave.

This will not apply if you come to an evening meeting: in this case you will enter via the rear access doors in the glass atrium at the back of the building and a Facilities Assistant will direct you to the room in which the meeting will take place.

Emergencies

In the event of a fire or any other emergency during the day, you will hear a continuous alarm. The designated officer or their deputy as set out in the displayed plans for each floor will take charge of any evacuation and try to ensure that no one is left within the areas for which they are responsible.

You should leave the building by the nearest available exit and go to the assembly point near to the exit barrier in the front car park. **Do not** use the lifts, and **do not** re-enter the building until someone advises that it is safe for you to do so.

If you discover a fire immediately operate the nearest fire alarm call point, inform reception or another member of staff, leave the building and go to the assembly point.

In the event of a fire or another emergency during an evening meeting, a member of staff will direct you to the nearest available exit.

First Aid

If someone feels unwell or needs first aid, please let a member of staff know.

Access for People with Disabilities

The Council Chamber and majority of Committee rooms are accessible to wheelchair users via the lift. There are specially adapted toilets on the ground floor (in main reception) and on the first floor of the building.

In the event of a fire or another emergency, wheelchair users will be guided to an area near to an exit to await the arrival of the emergency services.

Toilets

Public toilets are on the ground floor in the main reception area.

If you are visiting The Grange for an evening meeting, the toilets in close proximity to the Chamber and Committee rooms are all clearly signposted.

Smoking

The Council operates a NO SMOKING policy in all its office buildings, including the car park to The Grange.



East Cambridgeshire District Council

NOTICE OF MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an Extraordinary Meeting of the **EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held on **WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2024** in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at **THE GRANGE, NUTHOLT LANE, ELY, CB7 4EE**, commencing at **6:00pm** with up to 15 minutes of Public Question Time, immediately followed by the formal business, and you are summoned to attend for the transaction of the following business

AGENDA

- 1. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** [oral]
The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes Public Question Time (PQT) – questions/statements can be submitted in advance or placed in the PQT box in the Council Chamber prior to the commencement of the meeting – see Notes below for further information on the PQT scheme.
- 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** [oral]
- 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** [oral]
To receive declarations of interest from Members for any items on the Agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.
- 4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS** [oral]
- 5. POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY** Page 5

J Hill
Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Council

NOTES:

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. Admittance is on a "first come, first served" basis and public access will be from 30 minutes before the start time of the meeting. Due to room capacity restrictions, members of the public are asked, where

possible, to notify Democratic Services (democratic.services@eastcambs.gov.uk or 01353 665555) of their intention to attend a meeting.

The meeting will be webcast and a live stream of the meeting will be available. Further details can be found at [Council 11.12.24 | East Cambridgeshire District Council](#) Please be aware that all attendees, including those in the public gallery, will be visible on the livestream.

Public Questions/Statements are welcomed on any topic related to the Council's functions as long as there is no suspicion that it is improper (e.g. offensive, slanderous or might lead to disclosures of Exempt or Confidential information). Up to 15 minutes is allocated for this at the start of the meeting. Further details about the Public Question Time scheme are available at: <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/committees/public-question-time-scheme>

The Council has adopted a 'Purge on Plastics' strategy and is working towards the removal of all consumer single-use plastics in our workplace. Therefore, we do not provide disposable cups at our meetings and would ask members of the public to bring their own drink to the meeting, if required.

Fire instructions for meeting: The instructions in the event of a fire at the venue will be announced at the commencement of the meeting.

Reports are attached for each agenda item unless marked "oral".

If required, all items on the agenda can be provided in different formats (e.g. large type, Braille or audio tape, or translated into other languages), on request, by calling Main Reception on (01353) 665555 or e-mail: translate@eastcambs.gov.uk

If the Committee wishes to exclude the public and press from the meeting, a resolution in the following terms will need to be passed:

"That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item no(s). X because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item(s) there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category X of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."

TITLE: POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY

Committee: Extraordinary Council

Date: 11 December 2024

Author: Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Democratic Services & Elections Manager

Report number: Z118

Contact officer: John Hill, Chief Executive

John.hill@eastcambs.gov.uk 01353 616271, Room 103, The Grange, Ely

1.0 Issue

- 1.1. Details of the revised political balance of the Council and the implications for the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub Committees and other Member Bodies.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. Council is requested to:

- (i) consider the options detailed in Appendix 3 and 4 and other alternatives to achieve political proportionality in line with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989;
 - (ii) allocate one additional seat on the Committees or Sub-Committee (if required for the implementation of the option detailed in Appendix 3).

3.0 Background

- 3.1. On 19 November 2024, the Council received a Notification of Constitution of a Political Group in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. In addition, the Proper Officers also received a Requisition of Extraordinary Meeting of East Cambridgeshire District Council in accordance with the Council's Constitution (ref. Part A Page 3 Para 1.1.4) attached as Appendix 1.

- 3.2. The receipt of the notification of a new political group (Liberal Democrat & Independent Group) will have itself triggered a proportionality review and the need for the matter to be brought to Council. Nevertheless, the requisition notice has transcended this obligation.

- 3.3. The establishment of the Liberal Democrat & Independent Group has resulted in a revised political balance on the Council, specifically,

Conservative Group	14 Members
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Liberal Democrat & Independent Group	14 Members
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- 3.4. Therefore, there is a requirement to revisit the proportionality of Council as agreed previously (ref. Annual Council 23 May 2024 Agenda Item 4). The Council is obliged under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to allocate seats to

political groups and this distribution is based on the application of the principles detailed below (as far as reasonably practical).

- 3.5. The principles (ref. LGHA 1989 Part 1 (para 15 (5)) are set out below and should be considered in sequential order.
 - (a) Not all seats on the body are allocated to the same political group.
 - (b) The majority of the seats on the body are allocated to a political group if they form the majority of the authority's membership.
 - (c) The number of seats on the ordinary committees of the Council allocated to a particular political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of the Council as is the size of each political group.
 - (d) The number of seats on each individual body allocated to each political group bears the same proportion of the size of each political group.
- 3.6. The current allocation of seats on member bodies are detailed in Appendix 2. Please note that the proportionality calculations exclude the Licensing Committee and Licensing Statutory Sub Committee as advised by Counsel. In total, there are 53 seats on member bodies.
- 3.7. Returning to the principles outlined in paragraph 3.5
 - (a) Clearly not all seats have been allocated to both previous political groups.
 - (b) There is no majority group as defined in the LGHA 1989 either in previous and new scenarios.
 - (c) Given that there are an odd number of total Committee places, the current 14/14 i.e. 50%/50% proportionality cannot be achieved. Appendix 3 proposes an alternative to meet proportionality as set out in this principle, its implementation is dependant on:
 1. Increasing one Committee/member body membership by one increasing total seats to 54 (please note that Planning Committee increase by one is provided for illustrative purposes only).
 2. Agreement between Group Leaders or Council on the ceding of places from the Conservative to Liberal Democrat & Independent Group.
 - (d) In the event of the principle in (c) above not being achieved, the alternative would be to increase seats on each eligible body by one to achieve an even allocation of seats on each member body. There would be no requirement to cede or gain. This option is detailed in Appendix 4.
- 3.8. The requisition notice as attached in Appendix 1 includes reference to electing Chairs/Vice Chairs to the Council's committees and sub-committees. The Monitoring Officer has taken Counsel's opinion on this specific matter and they have concluded that Chairs and Vice Chairs of committees cannot be changed during the municipal year (ref Part 4, page 15, para 24.1.2).

4.0 Arguments/Conclusions

4.1. The agreement of the option detailed in Appendix 3 and 4 (or any other alternatives which meet the legislative requirements for political proportionality) will require a majority vote of the Council. Any alternative proposal which does not meet political proportionality require a “nem con” vote.

5.0 Additional Implications Assessment

5.1 In the table below, please put YES or NO in each box.

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Human Resources (HR) Implications
No	Yes	No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)
No	No	No

5.2. Legal Implications

As detailed in paragraph 3.2 above, receipt of the Notification of Constitution of a Political Group under s8 The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (“the Regulations”) triggered a requirement to review the allocation of seats to political groups under s 17(b) of the Regulations and this report seeks to give effect to that requirement.

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1	Requisition of Extraordinary meeting of Council.
Appendix 2	Current allocation of seats.
Appendix 3	Proposal to meet principle a-c of the LGHA 1989 (see para 3.7(c))
Appendix 4	Proposal to meet principle a-d of the LGHA 1989 (see para 3.7(d))

7.0 Background documents

Annual Council 23 May 2024
Agenda Item 4

For the attention of the Chair of East Cambridgeshire District Council

REQUISITION OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Under Clause 1.1.4 of Section 4 Rules of Procedure of the Constitution of East Cambridgeshire District Council, we the undersigned hereby requisition an Extraordinary Meeting of East Cambridgeshire District Council for the following purposes:

1. To consider and agree the sizes of the Council's committees and sub-committees and the proportionality of their membership.
2. To confirm membership of the Council's committees and sub-committees.
3. To elect Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Council's committees and sub-committees.

And any other related business.

1	[REDACTED]	LORNA DUPRE
2	[REDACTED]	CHIKA AKINWALE
3	[REDACTED]	ROSS TRENT
4	[REDACTED]	MARK INSKIP
5	[REDACTED]	CHRISTINE COLBERT

Dated 19 NOVEMBER 2024

POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY – CURRENT ARRANGEMENT

28 Members aligned to Political Groups

28 aligned Members – 53 seats 1 Member = 1.928 seats

APPENDIX 2

PARTY	NO. OF COUNCILLORS	PROPORTION OF TOTAL		
Conservative	14	50.00%		
Liberal Democrat	13	46.42%		
Independent	1	3.57%		
	28	100%		
BODY	TOTAL MEMBERS ON BODY	CONSERVATIVE [proportion of seats: 50%]	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT [proportion of seats: 46.42%]	INDEPENDENT [proportion of seats: 3.57%]
Full Council	28	14	13	1
Finance and Assets	11	5.5	5	0.39
Operational Services	11	5.5	5	0.39
Audit	5	2.5	2	0.17
Planning Committee	11	5.5	5	0.39
F&A Ethical Governance Sub-Committee	7	3.5	3	0.25
Licensing (Non-Stat) Sub Committee	5	2.5	2	0.17
Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee	3	1.5	1	0.10
Total Seats on ordinary committees under strict proportionality	53	26.5	23	1.89
Total Seats	53	30	23	0

POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY – PROPOSAL TO MEET PRINCIPLE a-c OF THE LGHA 1989

28 Members aligned to Political Groups

28 aligned Members – 54 seats

APPENDIX 3

PARTY	NO. OF COUNCILLORS	PROPORTION OF TOTAL		
Conservative	14	50%		
Liberal Democrat & Ind	14	50%		
	28	100%		
BODY	TOTAL MEMBERS ON BODY	CONSERVATIVE [proportion of seats: 50%]		LIBERAL DEMOCRAT & IND [proportion of seats: 50%]
Full Council	28	14	14	14
Finance and Assets	11	5.5	6	5.5
Operational Services	11	5.5	6	5.5
Audit	5	2.5	3	2.5
Planning Committee	12	6.0	6	6.0
F&A Ethical Governance Sub-Committee	7	3.5	4	3.5
Licensing (Non-Stat) Sub Committee	5	2.5	3	2.5
Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee	3	1.5	2	1.5
Total Seats on ordinary committees	54	27	30 (need to cede 3)	27 (need to gain 3)
Total Seats under strict proportionality	54		27	27

NOTE – To achieve the above from the current arrangements as shown in Appendix 2

- Lib Dem & Ind would gain a seat on one Committee/body via the increase in total seats to 54 (Planning for illustrative purposes only)
- Conservatives would need to cede 3 seats to bring both totals to 27

POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY – PROPOSAL TO MEET PRINCIPLE a-d OF THE LGHA 1989

28 Members aligned to Political Groups

28 aligned Members – 54 seats

APPENDIX 4

PARTY	NO. OF COUNCILLORS	PROPORTION OF TOTAL		
Conservative	14	50%		
Liberal Democrat & Ind	14	50%		
	28	100%		
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BODY	TOTAL MEMBERS ON BODY	CONSERVATIVE [proportion of seats: 50%]	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT & IND [proportion of seats: 50%]	
Full Council	28	14	14	14
Finance and Assets	12	6	6	6
Operational Services	12	6	6	6
Audit	6	3	3	3
Planning Committee	12	6	6	6
F&A Ethical Governance Sub-Committee	8	4	4	4
Licensing (Non-Stat) Sub Committee	6	3	3	3
Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee	4	2	2	2
Total Seats on ordinary committees under strict proportionality	60	30	30	30
Total Seats	60		30	30

NOTE – To achieve the above from the current arrangements as shown in Appendix 2

- Lib Dem & Ind would gain one seat on each committee – Conservatives would not need to cede any seats.

