

Meeting: ANNUAL COUNCIL
Date: 21 MAY 2026



CONSTITUTIONAL UPDATES

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider various matters relating to the Member level decision making structure of the Council and the Council's Constitution for the forthcoming Municipal Year.
- 1.2 To consider the proposed amendments of the Constitution as part of its annual review health-check by the Monitoring Officer.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Terms of Reference, as detailed in the appendices to this report; and the size and political composition for the following bodies that form the non-Executive Member level decision making structure of the Council be approved, subject to the rules of proportionality where appropriate for 94 Committee seats where applicable (relevant Committees are identified thus*) -
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee* (Appendix A) – 13 Members (7 Labour Members, 3 Reform Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members and 1 Conservative Member)
 - Community Select Committee* (Appendix B) – 11 Members (6 Labour Members, 3 Reform Members and 2 Liberal Democrat Members)
 - Environment and Economy Select Committee* (Appendix C) – 11 Members (6 Labour Members, 3 Reform Members and 2 Liberal Democrat Members)
 - Planning & Development Committee* (Appendix D) – 13 Members (7 Labour Members, 3 Reform Members, 2 Liberal Democrat Members and 1 Independent Member)
 - Licensing Committee (Appendix E) – 13 Members (7 Labour Members, 4 Reform Members and 2 Liberal Democrat Members)

- General Purposes Committee* (Appendix F) – 13 Members (7 Labour Members, 4 Reform Members and 2 Liberal Democrat Members).
- Appointments Committee* (Appendix G) - 7 Members (4 Labour Members, 2 Reform Members and 1 Liberal Democrat Member)
- Standards Committee* (Appendix H) – 7 Members (4 Labour Members, 1 Reform Member, 1 Liberal Democrat Member and 1 Conservative Member)
- Audit Committee* (Appendix I) – 9 Members (5 Labour Members, 2 Reform, 1 Liberal Democrat Member and 1 Independent Member).
- Statement of Accounts Committee* (Appendix J) – 7 Members (4 Labour Members, 2 Reform Members and 1 Liberal Democrat Member)
- Joint Consultative Committee* (Appendix K) – 3 Members (2 Labour Members and 1 Reform Member)

* Indicates where those bodies covered by the rules of proportionality for the purposes of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups), Regulations 1990 – total Committee places being 94

- 2.2 That the Borough Solicitor be authorised to make consequential amendments to the Constitution to reflect the proposal set out in Recommendation 2.1 above.
- 2.3 That the membership of the Cabinet and the individual Portfolios, as set out at item 11 and in the green paper tabled at the meeting, be noted.
- 2.4 That the various Cabinet bodies appointed by the Leader, detailed in Paragraph 4.4 of the report and the relevant Terms of Reference for each body set out in Appendix L to the report, be noted.
- 2.5 That Council approves the dates for Council meetings for the Municipal Year 2026/27, as shown at Paragraph 4.7 of the report, and notes the calendar of formal meetings shown at Appendix M to the report.
- 2.6 That Council approves the amendments to the Constitution set out in Appendix N as proposed by the Monitoring Officer.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The appointment and the terms of reference of Scrutiny, Regulatory and Advisory Committees that have no Executive functions are matters to be determined by Council.
- 3.2 It is for the Council to agree the dates of Council meetings and changes to the Constitution.
- 3.3 One of the functions of the Monitoring Officer is to be responsible for maintaining the Constitution and ensuring that it is updated. The proposed amendments are intended to improve clarification and reflect organisational change within the

council. The council commissioned an external review of the Constitution by the Association of Democratic Services Officers in 2024 which assisted in forming the Constitution review in 2025/26 and as well as this current review. Any future proposed changes to the Constitution will need to be considered so they are proportionate to Local Government Reorganisation for Hertfordshire. In addition, there may be the need to make further amendments as a result of the Government's National Scheme of Delegation of Planning Functions.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTIONS AND OTHER OPTIONS

Council's Committees and Panels - Terms of Reference and Composition

- 4.1 The proposed Terms of Reference for each of the bodies to be appointed by Council are set out in Appendices A – L. With the exception of the Licensing Committee, the political composition of those Committees is directed by the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

Cabinet

- 4.2 The Leader will be appointing Members to the Cabinet (with Portfolios). This information will be tabled at the Annual Council meeting.

Appointment of Cabinet Bodies

- 4.4 The Leader of the Council has agreed to retain the following Committees of the Cabinet –

Appeals, Grievances and Litigation Committee
Housing Development Working Group
Regeneration Working Group
Commercial and Investment Working Group
Housing Working Group
Stevenage, North Herts., East Herts. and Hertsmere Joint CCTV Committee
Stevenage and East Herts. Joint Executive Revenues and Benefits Shared Service Committee
Stevenage and East Herts Joint ICT Executive Committee

- 4.5 The terms of reference for these Committees / Working Groups may be found at Appendix L.
- 4.6 Membership of these bodies is limited to only Members of the Cabinet. Details of the memberships of these Committees will be set out in the schedule circulated with the Supplementary Agenda.

Dates of Council meetings

- 4.7 To comply with Standing Orders the Council should approve its programme of meetings annually. The approval of dates for Council meetings for the year does not preclude extraordinary or special meetings being called by the Chief Executive,

in consultation with the Mayor; nor for the date, time or place to be altered in accordance with the Regulations or where a material change of circumstances makes it necessary. The dates proposed for Council are as follows:

- 22 July 2026
- 14 October 2026
- 16 December 2026
- 28 January 2027
- 24 February 2027 – Budget Setting Meeting
- 27 May 2027 – Annual Meeting

- 4.8 A provisional calendar of formal meetings is also appended to this report at Appendix M. This calendar will be subject to change and any alterations to dates of meetings, additions and cancellations will be notified to Members. Previous draft versions of the calendar should be discarded.
- 4.9 It should be noted that the draft calendar includes some dates for ‘Select Committees’ details of which specific meetings will be held on those dates will be notified to Members as we go through the year.
- 4.10 The calendar of formal meetings appears on the Council's website and is regularly updated. Furthermore, following Council appointing to each body, Members will be sent ‘Outlook’ calendar invitations to the meetings that are relevant to them.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

5.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

5.2 A local authority is under a duty to prepare and keep up to date its Constitution under section 9P Local Government Act 2000 as amended.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Council’s Constitution.

APPENDICES

- Terms of Reference
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Appendix A)
 - Community Select Committee (Appendix B)
 - Environment and Economy Select Committee (Appendix C)
 - Planning and Development Committee (Appendix D)
 - Licensing Committee (Appendix E)
 - General Purposes Committee (Appendix F)
 - Appointments Committee (Appendix G)

- Standards Committee (Appendix H)
- Audit Committee (Appendix I)
- Statement of Accounts Committee (Appendix J)
- Joint Consultative Committee (Appendix K)
- Terms of Reference – Cabinet Bodies (Appendix L)
- Provisional Calendar of Meetings 2025/26 (Appendix M)
- Amendments to the Constitution (Appendix N)