

## ASSEMBLY

19 February 2014

<b>Title:</b> Formation of UK Independence Party Group and Appointment to Committees	
<b>Report of the Chief Executive</b>	
<b>Open Report</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Wards Affected:</b> None	<b>Key Decision:</b> No
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<b>Accountable Divisional Director:</b> Fiona Taylor, Head of Legal and Democratic Services	
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Graham Farrant, Chief Executive	
<b>Summary</b> <p>This report advises the Assembly of the formation of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) Group with effect from 20 January 2014 and the allocation of seats to committees in accordance with the political balance requirements of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.</p> <p>A verbal update will also be given at the meeting in respect of the appointment to the position of Lead Member of the Children's Services Select Committee (who shall also fill the vacancy on the Public Accounts and Audit Select Committee) and, if appropriate, the Deputy Lead Member position, which are to be considered by the Labour Group on 17 February 2014.</p>	
<b>Recommendation(s)</b> <p>The Assembly is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) Note the formation of the UK Independence Party Group with effect from 20 January 2014;</li><li>(ii) Approve the appointment of Councillor R Douglas as a member of the Living and Working Select Committee and Councillor G Letchford as a member of the Children's Services Select Committee; and</li><li>(iii) Approve the nominations of the Labour Group regarding the appointment of Lead Member and, if appropriate, the Deputy Lead Member of the Children's Services Select Committee and to the vacancy on the Public Accounts and Audit Select Committee.</li></ul>	
<b>Reason(s)</b> <p>The Assembly is required to make appointments to committees, having regard to the requirements of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.</p>	

## **1. Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 Political Groups on the Council are formed in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 when two or more councillors notify the Chief Executive, as Proper Officer, of their wish to be treated as a group.
- 1.2 Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 imposes a duty on the Assembly at its annual meeting, or as soon as possible after it, to review the allocation of seats on the committees of the Council between the political groups. The Assembly may carry out such a review at any other time and may do so if requested by a political group.
- 1.3 The following principles apply to the allocation of seats:
- (a) That not all the seats on the body to which appointments are being made are allocated to the same political group;
  - (b) That the majority of seats on each committee are allocated to a particular group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
  - (c) That, subject to (a) and (b), when allocating seats to a political group, the total number of their seats across all the ordinary committees of the Council, must reflect their proportion of the authority's membership; and
  - (d) Subject to (a) to (c), that the number of seats on each committee is as far as possible in proportion to the group's membership of the authority.
- 1.4 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires that once the Assembly has determined the allocation of committee places between the political groups it must then appoint the nominees of the political groups to the committees.

## **2. Proposal and Issues**

- 2.1 Formal notification was received on 20 January 2014 that the three UKIP Council Members, Councillor D Hunt, Councillor R Douglas and Cllr G Letchford, had formed a group for the purposes of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. Councillor D Hunt has been chosen as the Leader of the UKIP Group.
- 2.2 In accordance with political balance requirements, the UKIP Group is entitled to six seats across the committees which are subject to proportional representation. Four of the six seats are already occupied by UKIP Councillors and the following nominations have been received to fill the vacancies on the Living and Working Select Committee and the Children's Services Select Committee:-
- Councillor R Douglas - Living and Working Select Committee
  - Councillor G Letchford - Children's Services Select Committee
- 2.3 The position of Lead Member of the Children's Services Select Committee is currently vacant following Councillor Letchford's resignation from the Labour Group and as a member of the Select Committee. Nominations to fill the Lead Member vacancy and, if appropriate, the Deputy Lead Member position, are to be

considered by the Labour Group on 17 February 2014 and will be verbally reported by the Labour Group Secretary at the meeting.

- 2.4 The person appointed as Lead Member of the Children's Services Select Committee shall also become a member of the Public Accounts and Audit Select Committee, in accordance with the membership arrangements for PAASC.

### **3. Options Appraisal**

- 3.1 This is not applicable as the process and procedures are governed by legislation.

### **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 The proposals within this report have been developed in consultation with the Labour Group Secretary and the Leader of the UKIP Group.

### **5. Financial Implications**

Implications completed by: Jonathan Bunt, Chief Finance Officer

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report, except in relation to the Special Responsibility Allowances payable in respect of the positions of Lead and Deputy Lead Member of the Children's Services Select Committee which shall be met from the existing Members' Allowances budget.

### **6. Legal Implications**

Implications completed by: Fiona Taylor, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

- 6.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of the report.

**Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None**

**List of appendices: None**