

Committee Composition, Allocation of Seats to Political Groups, and Committee Membership

Report of the Clerk

For further information about this report please contact Anthea Lowe, Clerk and Monitoring Officer, on 01952 383219.

1 Purpose of Report

This report asks the Fire Authority to agree both the composition of its Committees and the allocations of seats on its committees to political groups. It also requests the Fire Authority to confirm the appointment of Members to serve on Committees.

2 Recommendations

The Fire Authority is asked to

- a) Agree the Committee composition and allocation of seats to political groups, as set out in Appendix A to this report; and
- b) Confirm the appointment of Members to serve on Committees, as set out in the Appendix to the report.

3 Background

In accordance with the Fire Authority's Standing Order 7(2) (for the Regulation of Proceedings and Business), the Fire Authority is required to review at its Annual Meeting the constitution and composition of any committees or sub-committees, which have been appointed.

The Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and Regulations made thereunder, require that seats on standing committees are politically balanced across the total number of committee places (i.e. in aggregate) and, subject to that overriding requirement, each committee has to be politically balanced, as far as reasonably practicable.

4 Committee Composition and Allocation of Seats

At the Extraordinary Fire Authority meeting held on 23 July 2025, the Fire Authority agreed changes to its governance arrangements based on the outcomes of the governance review that was completed in early 2025, some of which have led to the committee composition and allocation of seats having to be amended, namely

Increase in size of Fire Authority

The Fire Authority made the decision to increase the size of the Authority from 15 to 17 Members. In practice this has meant that each of the two constituent authorities of Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council have appointed an additional member to the Fire Authority.

The political groupings of the Fire Authority are now as follows:

Political Group	Shropshire Council	Telford & Wrekin Council	Total Seats
Conservative	1	1	2
Green / Progressive Independent	1	0	1
Labour	1	4	5
Liberal Democrat	6	1	7
Reform	2	0	2
Total Seats	11	6	17

For the member who is the only representative of their political group on the Fire Authority, that is Green/Progressive Independent, they must affiliate to one of the larger political groupings in order for them to participate in the Fire Authority's Committees.

The Committee composition and allocation of seats proposed in Appendix A to this report is based on indications that the Green/Progressive Independent member will affiliate to Liberal Democrats and that both the Reform members and the Conservative members will sit as two parties of two.

Re-organisation of Fire Authority Structure

The Fire Authority approved the re-organisation of its Committee structure including the creation of a dedicated Performance & Scrutiny Committee, which five Fire Authority Members will sit on. There has also been a change to the size of the Audit & Standards Committee with this now having seven rather than eight seats.

The Committee composition and allocation of seats set out in this report reflects the changes outlined above and Members are asked to agree this as set out in Appendix A to the report.

5 Appointment of Members to serve on Committees

In addition to agreeing the allocation of seats to political groups, the Fire Authority is asked to confirm the appointment of Members as set out in Appendix B to the report.

6 Financial Implications

There are no direct costs arising from the recommendations of this report, although many decisions of committees will impact on budgets and need financial approval.

7 Legal Comment

The Fire Authority must comply with the political balance requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and associated Regulations, when allocating seats on its standing committees. The proposals contained within this report comply with the obligations contained within the legislation.

8 Initial Impact Assessment

As this report merely proposes allocations of seats to political groups in order to meet legislative requirements, an Initial Impact Assessment has not been completed.

9 Equality Impact Assessment

As this report has no differential impacts on people, an Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

10 Appendices

Appendix A

Proposed Committee Composition and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

Appendix B

Membership of Committees (October 2025)

11 Background Papers

There are no background papers associated with this report.

Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority Proposed Committee Composition and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Reform	Conservative	Total Seats
Shropshire Council	7*	10	2	1	11
Telford & Wrekin Council	1	4	0	1	6
Total Number of Seats	8	5	2	2	17
Percentage of Seats	47%	27%	13%	13%	

* This figure includes a Green/Progressive Independent member who affiliates to Liberal Democrats on this Authority

The following allocation of seats on the Fire Authority's committees is proposed.

** These rows indicate the actual number of Members each political group should have, based on the percentage of Members it has of the Fire Authority as a whole.

	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Reform	Conservative	Total Seats
** Strategy & Resources Committee Members: 7					
	3.297	2.058	0.826	0.826	7.007
Allocation	3	2	1	1	7
** Audit & Standards Committee Members: 7					
	3.297	2.058	0.826	0.826	7.007
Allocation	3	2	1	1	7
** Performance & Scrutiny Committee Members: 5					
	2.355	1.47	0.59	0.59	5.005
Allocation	2	1	1	1	5
** Brigade Managers Employment Panel Members: 7					
	3.297	2.058	0.826	0.826	7.007
Allocation	3	2	1	1	7

	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Reform	Conservative	Total Seats
** Pensions Panel Members: 3	1.413	0.882	0.354	0.354	3.00
Allocation	2	1	0	0	3
** Personnel Panel Members: 3	1.413	0.882	0.354	0.354	3.00
Allocation	2	1	0	0	3
** Appeals Panel Members: 3	1.413	0.882	0.354	0.354	3.00
Allocation	2	1	0	0	3
** Aggregate Seats	16.4850	10.29	4.13	4.13	35.035
Total Seats Allocation	17	10	4	4	35

Pensions Panel

It is recommended that the seats on the Pensions Panel be allocated as follows:

- 1 seat to be taken by Chair or Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority
- Remaining seats to be taken by balancing members

Brigade Managers Employment Panel

Seats on the Brigade Managers Employment Panel should be allocated as follows

- 1 seat to be taken by Chair of Fire Authority
- 1 seat to be taken by Vice Chair of Fire Authority
- Each Political Group Leader to sit on Panel
- Remaining seats to be taken by balancing members

Strategic Advisory Group

Although Members agreed that this Group should be politically balanced, it does not form part of the political balance calculations, as it is a Working Group, rather than a fully constituted committee of the Fire Authority. Proposed allocations are:

	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Reform	Conservative	Total Seats
* Members: 8	3.768	2.352	0.944	0.944	8.008
Allocation	4	2	1	1	8

Seats on the Strategic Advisory Group should be allocated as follows:

- 1 seat to be taken by the Chair of the Fire Authority
- 1 seat to be taken by the Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority
- 1 seat to be taken by Chair of Strategy and Resources Committee
- 1 seat to be taken by Chair of Standards, Audit and Performance Committee
- Each Political Group Leader to sit on the Group
- Remaining seats to be taken by balancing members

Membership of Committees (October 2025)

Committee	Political Group			
	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Reform	Conservative
Strategy and Resources 7 Members <u>Please see note 1</u>	Seats – 3 1. 2. 3.	Seats - 2 1. 2.	Seats - 1 1.	Seats – 1 1.
Audit and Standards 7 Members <u>Please see note 2</u>	Seats - 3 1. 2. 3.	Seats - 2 1. 2.	Seats - 1 1.	Seats – 1 1.
Performance and Scrutiny 5 Members <u>Please see note 3</u>	Seats – 2 1. 2.	Seats – 1 1.	Seats – 1 1.	Seats – 1 1.
Brigade Managers’ Employment Panel 7 Members <u>Please see note 4</u>	Seats – 3 1. 2. 3.	Seats - 2 1. 2.	Seats – 1 1.	Seats - 1
Pensions Panel 3 Members	Seats – 2 1. 2.	Seat – 1 1.	Seats – 0	
Personnel Panel 3 Members	Seats – 2 1. 2. Substitute – 2 1. 2.	Seats - 1 1. Substitute - 1.	Seats - 0 Substitute - 0	

Committee	Political Group			
	Liberal Democrat	Labour	Reform	Conservative
Appeals Panel of the Personnel Panel 3 Members	Seats – 2 1. 2. Substitute – 2 1. 2.	Seats - 1 1. Substitute - 1.	Seats - 0 Substitute - 0	
Strategic Advisory Group 8 Members <u>Please see note 5</u>	Seats -4 1. 2. 3. 4.	Seats – 2 1. 2.	Seats - 1 1.	Seats - 1

Notes

1	Members of the Performance and Scrutiny Committee <u>cannot</u> sit on the Strategy & Resources Committee
2	Members of the Performance and Scrutiny Committee <u>cannot</u> sit on the Audit & Standards Committee
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority <u>cannot</u> sit on the Performance & Scrutiny Committee The Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Strategy & Resources and Audit & Standards Committee <u>cannot</u> sit on the Performance & Scrutiny Committee Members of the Strategy & Resources and the Audit & Standards Committee <u>cannot</u> sit on the Performance & Scrutiny Committee
4	Members to include Chair and Vice-Chair of Fire Authority and leaders of each Political Group
5	Members to include Chair and Vice-Chair of Fire Authority, Chairs of each Committee and leaders of each Political Group