

Agenda Item: 15

Meeting: Council

Date: 18 June 2009

Subject: **Appointments to the Joint Selection Committee (for Bedfordshire Police Authority) and the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority 2009/10**

Report of: Assistant Director, Legal and Democratic

Summary: The report outlines the requirements for member appointments to these two bodies, as previously agreed. Nominations from group leaders will be circulated separately.

Contact Officer: Rob Mills, Committee Services Manager

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Council:

- (a) appoints five members to serve upon the Joint Selection Committee which will be responsible for appointing members of Bedfordshire Police Authority; and**
- (b) nominates four members whom the Joint Selection Committee may wish to consider for appointment to the Bedfordshire Police Authority, reflecting the requirement so far as practicable for political balance across all three constituent Councils as a whole (Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough).**

2. That the Council appoints five members to serve upon the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority, reflecting political balance within Central Bedfordshire Council.

Bedfordshire Police Authority and the Joint Selection Committee

1. Bedfordshire Police Authority (BPA) has a strategic policy and monitoring role over the police service across the areas of Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough. It comprises 17 members, of whom 9 are to be members of the three relevant councils and 8 are to be independent members.

2. Regulations made under the Police Act 1996 require appointments to be made in Bedfordshire's case by a joint selection committee consisting of members appointed by the three relevant councils. The number of members on the joint committee, and the number that each council appoints to it, should be agreed locally, although the Secretary of State can arbitrate in the absence of an agreement between the relevant councils.
3. In making its appointments to BPA, the joint committee must ensure, so far as practicable, that the membership reflects the balance of the political parties across all three constituent Councils as a whole (Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough). Since, prior to 1 April 2009, it had been custom and practice in Bedfordshire for the members of the joint committee also to be appointed as the members of the BPA, it was expected that the joint committee would similarly reflect the overall political balance across the three authorities.
4. The three authorities agreed in March 2009, after consultation with the Home Office Minister, that:
 - (a) the Joint Selection Committee would comprise 11 members, being 3 from Bedford Borough Council (at the time 2 Conservative and 1 Liberal Democrat), 5 from Central Bedfordshire Council (at the time 4 Conservative and 1 Liberal Democrat) and 3 from Luton Borough Council (2 Labour and 1 Liberal Democrat);
 - (b) the composition of the Joint Selection Committee would be reviewed every two years and adjusted as necessary to reflect any changes in population (population being the key factor in determining the split between the three authorities, in the view of the Home Office Minister);
 - (c) the Joint Selection Committee should allocate the 9 local authority seats on the BPA on the basis of population as follows (also reflecting the overall political balance at that time):

Bedford Borough Council	2 seats (2 Conservative)
Central Bedfordshire Council	4 seats (3 Conservative and 1 Liberal Democrat)
Luton Borough Council	3 seats (2 Labour and 1 Liberal Democrat).
5. Luton Borough Council's 3 BPA members were already appointed until May 2009 and so were appointed unchanged to the Joint Selection Committee. Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire Councils then appointed 3 and 5 members respectively to the Joint Selection Committee for the period until the election in June 2009. It was recognised that the overall political balance and its impact on the allocation of seats between the political parties would need to be reviewed after the June 2009 elections for the two new unitary authorities, and adjusted if necessary for the period until 2011.

6. The Joint Selection Committee met in April 2009 and appointed members to BPA, in line with the agreed allocation method, until 25 June 2009 or until 8 June if particular members did not stand for re-election or were not re-elected.
7. The Joint Selection Committee will therefore need to meet again as soon as possible after the election to appoint members to BPA in accordance with the post-election balance of political parties across the three authorities, as shown below:

Authority:	Conservative	Independent	Labour	Liberal Democrat	No Party	Totals
Bedford	9	6	7	13	1	36
Central Beds	54	0	0	11	1	66
Luton	5	0	26	17	0	48
Totals	68	6	33	41	2	150
% of total seats	45.33%	4.00%	22.00%	27.33%	1.33%	100.00%
no. of JSC seats (rounded in brackets)	4.99 (5)	0.44 (1)	2.42 (2)	3.01 (3)	0.15 (0)	11
no. of BPA seats (rounded in brackets)	4.08 (4)	0.36 (0)	1.98 (2)	2.46 (3)	0.12 (0)	9

8. Appointments to the Joint Selection Committee are now required on the above basis. While (as stated above) the making of appointments to the BPA itself is a matter for the Joint Selection Committee, this Council may also wish as before to nominate four members to be considered for membership of the BPA, similarly reflecting the overall political balance requirements.

Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority

9. Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority provides fire and rescue services across the areas of Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough and comprises up to 25 members, of whom 12 are to be members of the relevant councils.
10. The 1996 Order establishing the Authority (as amended to reflect local government reorganisation in April 2009) requires that appointments should be made by each of the three councils in proportion to its electorate, resulting in the following allocation:

Bedford Borough Council	3 seats
Central Bedfordshire Council	5 seats
Luton Borough Council	4 seats.

11. In this case appointments are, as far as practicable, to reflect political balance within each appointing council. Central Bedfordshire Council appointed its 5 members (4 Conservative and 1 Liberal Democrat) on this basis for the period until the election in June 2009.
12. Appointment of five members to the Combined Fire Authority is now required, reflecting the post-election political balance within Central Bedfordshire Council, which is:

	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Independent	Total
No. and % of councillors	54 (81.82%)	11 (16.67%)	1 (1.52%)	66 (100%)
Allocation of seats	4.09 (4)	0.83 (1)	0.08 (0)	5

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The appointments are required as part of the Council's statutory responsibilities.

Financial:

None.

Legal:

Appointments to the Joint Selection Committee and Bedfordshire Police Authority are governed by the Police Act 1996 (as amended by S.I. 2009/119) and The Police Authority Regulations 2008 (S.I. 2008/630).

Appointments to the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority are governed by The Bedfordshire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1996 (S.I. 1996/2918) as amended by S.I 2009/119.

Risk Management:

None.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None.

Equalities/Human Rights:

None.

Community Safety:

None.

Sustainability:

None.

Appendices:

None.

Background Papers:

None.