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| Report To: | Annual Council |
| Date: | 18 th May 2026 |
| Subject: | Democratic Arrangements 2026/27 |
| Purpose: | To establish the democratic arrangements for the Council for the municipal year 2026/27, make appointments to outside bodies and re-appoint the Council's Independent Persons. |
| Key Decision: | N/A |
| Portfolio Holder: | N/A |
| Report Of: | John Medler, Service Director – Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer) |
| Report Author: | Amanda Dickinson, Democratic Services Team Leader |
| Ward(s) Affected: | None |
| Exempt Report: | No |

Summary

This report sets out recommendations for the Council to establish the democratic arrangements for the Council's Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels and Working Groups for the municipal year 2026/27, make appointments to outside bodies where these are due to be made and appoint Independent Persons for the Council.

Recommendations

That the Council:

1. Approves the establishment of Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels and Working Groups for the Municipal Year 2026/27, including the allocation of seats to political groups and appointments (and substitutes) as nominated by Political Group Leaders, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report;
2. Appoints Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees in accordance with the nominations received at the Annual Meeting of the Council as set out in either Appendix 2 to this report;

3. Approves the Programme of Ordinary Council and Committee Meetings for the Council Municipal Year 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 3 to this report and grants delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Chairman to amend meeting dates or cancel meetings as and when required;
4. Notes the membership of the Cabinet and Portfolios for the Municipal Year 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 4 to this report;
5. Receives nominations and makes appointments to the outside bodies where the Council is the appointing body as set out in Appendix 5 to this report; such appointments to automatically terminate at the end of the appointment term or if the Member ceases to be a Member of the authority;
6. Re-appoints Amanda Boustred and David Irvine as the Council's Independent Persons for a two year term; and
7. Re- appoints Simon Sperring, Chris Penney and Nicci Marzec as members of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel for a two year term.

Reasons for Recommendations

To establish the Council's democratic arrangements and appointments to outside bodies for the municipal year 2026/27 in accordance with the provisions set out in the Council's Constitution and legislation.

Other Options Considered

Not to approve or make amendments to the proposed arrangements as long as such changes are in accordance with legal and constitutional requirements.

1. Background

- 1.1 Members are requested to make the appropriate determinations regarding the democratic arrangements for the Council's Committees, Panels and Working Groups for the municipal year 2026/27 and appointments to outside bodies. Further information relating to each case is set out below.

2. Establishment of Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels and Working Groups

- 2.1 The Council's Constitution sets out that at the Annual Meeting, the Council will decide which panels (not including Scrutiny task and finish panels), committees, sub-committees or working groups to establish for the following municipal year. Appendix 1 sets out the proposed arrangements for 2026/27 and which will operate in accordance with the relevant terms of reference as set out in the Council's Constitution.

- 2.2 In the case of those panels, committees and sub-committees where the political balance rules apply (as indicated in Appendix 1) the allocation of seats to political groups must be made in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (1989 Act) and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (as amended). The legislation places a duty on the Council to review political balance at its annual meeting. Applying the principles set out in the legislation produces the allocation of seats to political groups as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Once the allocation of seats has been determined, there is then a duty on the Council to give effect to the political group allocation by making appointments to seats in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group. The proposed appointments to seats, as expressed by Group Leaders, are also set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.4 The Constitution provides for substitutes (where applicable) as follows:
- Planning Committee – the Council will appoint the same number of named substitutes in respect of each political group as that group holds ordinary seats on the committees, up to a maximum of 2.
 - Audit and Governance Committee – the Council will appoint the same number of named substitutes in respect of each political group as that group holds ordinary seat on the committee, up to a maximum of 1.
 - Substitute Councillors will not be permitted for meetings of the Licensing Committee / Regulatory and Appeals Committee
 - Open substitution will be permitted in the case of other Member groups and bodies (i.e. committees, panels, consultative committees and working groups) provided the appropriate form is completed prior to the meeting.
- 2.5 Details of named substitutes as received from Political Group Leaders are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 2.6 **The Council is therefore recommended to approve the establishment of Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels and Working Groups for the Municipal Year 2026/27, including the allocation of seats to political groups and appointments (and substitutes) as nominated by Political Group Leaders, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.**

3. Appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen

- 3.1. A list of the nominations for the positions of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees is attached at Appendix 2 to this report.
- 3.2. **The Council is recommended to appoint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels for 2026/27 in accordance with the nominations received at the Annual Meeting of the Council as set out within Appendix 2.**
- 3.3. The remainder of the appointments of Chairmen and Vice Chairmen will be made at the first meeting of the appropriate committee, panel or working group.

4. Boston Borough Council Programme of Meetings 2026/27

- 4.1. A draft Schedule of meetings for the 2026/27 Municipal Year is attached at Appendix 3 to this report. This has been developed with relevant members and officers. The programme provides a clear timetable which supports the decision-making processes within the Council and takes account of the current District election timetable. Care has been taken to ensure that all the necessary business of the Council can be managed within the proposed programme. Extraordinary meetings can be called to deal with urgent business should the need arise.
- 4.2. **The Council is recommended to approve the Programme of Ordinary Council and Committee Meetings for the Council Municipal Year 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 3 to this report and grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Chairman to amend meeting dates or cancel meetings as and when required.**

5. Cabinet and Allocation of Portfolios

- 5.1. In accordance with the Executive Arrangements adopted by the Council, the Leader was formally appointed by the Council at its Meeting on Monday 21st July 2025. The Leader then appoints Members to serve on the Cabinet and allocates portfolios as set out in Appendix 4 of the report, details of which are required to be submitted to the Annual Meeting of Full Council for information purposes.

6. Appointments to Outside Bodies

- 6.1. Appointments to outside bodies fall into two broad categories. Some appointments are made on an annual basis and are reviewed each civic year by the Council. Other appointments are made on a longer-term basis, where the length of the appointment is determined by the constitution, trust deed, or governance arrangements of the external body concerned.
- 6.2. Where long-term appointments are made, they do not automatically align with the Council's annual cycle and continue for the full period specified by the outside body. A number of these long-term appointments were made in 2023 and the specified terms have now come to an end, meaning that the appointments are due to be considered again by the Council at the Annual Meeting 2026.
- 6.3. All Members of the Council, via the Political Group Leaders, have therefore been invited to indicate their interest in being considered for appointment or re-appointment to those outside bodies where appointments are due to be made.
- 6.4. In addition, the Thomas Sanderson Trust provides for the appointment of two Trustees, comprising either one Councillor and one lay member, or two lay members. One Councillor Trustee is currently in post; however, there is a vacancy for the remaining Trustee position. The Council is therefore invited to make an appointment to fill this vacancy, in accordance with the Trust's governing arrangements.
- 6.5. **The Council is recommended to receive nominations and make appointments to serve on the outside bodies listed in Appendix 5. Appointments will automatically terminate at the end of the relevant appointment term, or earlier if**

the appointee ceases to be a Member of the authority, unless the appointment is not restricted to elected Members.

7. Re-appointment of Independent Persons

- 7.1. The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to promote and maintain high standards of conduct for elected and co-opted members, including the adoption of a Members' Code of Conduct and the establishment of arrangements for dealing with complaints alleging breaches of that Code. These arrangements must include the appointment of at least one Independent Person.
- 7.2. The Council must also have regard to the Independent Person's views before making a decision on an allegation that it has decided to investigate. In addition, under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, the Council is required to maintain a panel of Independent Persons to advise on matters relating to the dismissal of certain statutory officers.
- 7.3. Amanda Boustred and David Irvine were appointed as the Council's Independent Persons by Full Council on 19 May 2025 for an initial one-year term.
- 7.4. Both Independent Persons have demonstrated the relevant professional competence to undertake the role and confirmed their willingness to continue in the role. Their re-appointment will ensure the Council is able to continue to discharge its statutory responsibilities and provide resilience should one Independent Person be unavailable.
- 7.5. **It is recommended that the Council re-appoint Amanda Boustred and David Irvine as Boston Borough Council's Independent Persons for a further two-year term.**

8. Re-appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel

- 8.1. The Council is required under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to Council in relation to Members' Allowances.
- 8.2. Simon Sperring was appointed as a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel by Full Council, most recently at the Annual General Meeting in 2022, to serve until the Annual General Meeting of the Council in May 2026, and has continued to act in the role, including as Chairman.
- 8.3. Chris Penney and Nicci Marzec were appointed as members of the Independent Remuneration Panel by Full Council at its meeting on 20th May 2024.
- 8.4. Maintaining an appointed and experienced Panel ensures that the Council remains in a position to convene the Panel as and when required to discharge its statutory functions.
- 8.5. **It is recommended that the Council re-appoints Simon Sperring, Chris Penney and Nicci Marzec as members of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel for a further two-year term.**

Implications

South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

None

Corporate Priorities

None.

Staffing

None.

Workforce Capacity Implications

None.

Constitutional and Legal Implications

The operation of committees and sub-committees and the appointment of members to outside bodies are dealt with in the Constitution and in law (Local Government Act 1972, Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990).

Data Protection

None.

Financial

The costs of the democratic services arrangements are contained within existing revenue budgets.

Risk Management

None.

Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales

Consultation on the Schedule of Meetings has been undertaken with Group Leaders and Committee Chairmen, in addition to senior officers. Appointments to committees and sub-committees, and outside bodies, reflect the wishes of the relevant Political Group/Group Leader.

Reputation

None.

Contracts

None.

Crime and Disorder

None

Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding

None.

Health and Wellbeing

None.

Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment

Not undertaken.

Acronyms

None.

Appendices

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

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| Appendix 1 | Membership of Committees 2026/27 |
| Appendix 2 | Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees 2026/27 |
| Appendix 3 | BBC Programme of Meetings 2026/27 |
| Appendix 4 | Cabinet Appointments and Portfolios |
| Appendix 5 | Council Representation on Outside Bodies 2026/27 |

Background Papers

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

Chronological History of this Report

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body.

Report Approval

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