

Council

12 May 2026

Part 1 - Public

Matters for Decision



Cabinet Member	N/A
Responsible Officer	Adrian Stanfield, Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive
Report Author	Allison Parris, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Appointments to Scrutiny Select Committees, Panels and Other Member Groups

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 At each Annual meeting of the Council and beginning of the municipal year, Members are asked to approve the membership of Scrutiny Select Committees, Panels and Other Member Groups in accordance with the Terms of Reference and delegated responsibilities set out in the Constitution.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 Formal appointments reflecting determined political balance arrangements supports effective governance and decision making.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That the appointments to Scrutiny Select Committees, Panels and Other Member Groups for the municipal year 2026/27 be approved in accordance with Members preferred option as set out at Annex 3 to the report.

4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 In order for the Council to conduct its business, formal appointments are required for each Scrutiny Select Committee, Panel and Other Member Groups to reflect the determined political balance arrangements (where they apply).
- 4.2 Details of the Borough Council's current political balance arrangements are set out elsewhere on the agenda.

- 4.3 The main function of the Scrutiny Select Committees, Panels and Other Member Groups is to advise the Executive in accordance with Part 3 of the Constitution.

5 Proposal

- 5.1 Each Group Leader has considered the membership of Committees and the nominations received are set out in Annex 3.
- 5.1 Consideration was also given to consequential changes arising from the implementation of planning committee reforms under the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 and these are set out at Option A in Annex 3.
- 5.2 It should be noted that there is no requirement for the Parish Partnership Panel or Tonbridge Community Forum to be politically balanced as they are for the exchange of information and discussion with parish councils and Tonbridge based organisations.
- 5.3 There is also no requirement for the Housing Association Liaison Panel, the Joint Transportation Board and the Joint Employee Consultative Committee (JECC) to be politically balanced as they aren't ordinary committees of the Council for the purposes of the relevant legislation governing political balance. However, the Leader, in consultation with Group Leaders, is satisfied that political balance principles should be applied for ease of nominations.

6 Other Options

- 6.1 The proposal presented is the preferred option following consultation with Group Leaders.

7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications related to these proposals. The cost of servicing committees will be met through existing budgets.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 Proper and appropriate political representation is key to good governance and decision making. Failure to acknowledge and deal with any political balance changes could lead to improper governance and ineffective decision making.

9 Legal Implications

- 9.1 The Borough Council is required to review the composition of its committees in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (duty to allocate seats to political groups) and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) regulations 1990.

10 Consultation and Communications

- 10.1 Full Council is required to note and agree any changes to political balance and its impact on committee appointments. Presenting a revised political balance report at Full Council is a statutory requirement.
- 10.2 Consultation has been undertaken in respect of this report with the leaders of each of the political groups represented on the Council. Their agreement has been obtained to the calculations relating to the allocation of seats on committees and their respective nominations will be considered else on the agenda for this meeting.

11 Implementation

- 11.1 If agreed at Annual Council the appointments to committees etc will come into immediate effect.

12 Cross Cutting Issues

12.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

12.1.1 Limited or low impact on emissions and environment.

12.1.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

12.2 Equalities and Diversity

12.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

12.3 Other If Relevant

- None

Background Papers	None
Annex 3	Appointments to Scrutiny Select Committees Appointments to Panels and Other Groups