

**Report to:** Council

**Date of Meeting** 15 July 2026

**Heading/Title:** Appointment of Temporary Chair for the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Cabinet Member(s):** Council Co-ordination and External Engagement (Cllr John Loudoun)

**Director/Assistant Director:** Legal & Governance (James Docherty)

**Author and Directorate:** Democratic Services Manager – Governance (Andrew Melhuish)

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**Key decision No**

**If a Key Decision has it appeared on Forward Plan**

**Document classification:** Part A Public Document

**Exemption applied:** None

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 This report seeks to appoint a temporary Chair for the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the duration of the absence of the substantive Chair and Vice Chair.
- 1.2 The Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee is currently without its appointed Chair and Vice Chair. To ensure the effective discharge of the Committee's responsibilities it is proposed that a temporary Chair is appointed to preside over meetings and undertake the duties associated with the role until the substantive Chair and Vice Chair return.
- 1.3 Whilst the position of Vice Chair is also absent the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee can appoint to the position by passing a Motion Without Notice at its next meeting for the duration of that meeting if required.

## **2. Recommendations/Decision**

- 2.1 To appoint Councillor Chris Burhop as a temporary Chair of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee with immediate effect, to serve until the return of the substantive Chair.

## **3. Reasons for Recommendations/Decision**

- 3.1 The Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee plays an important role in holding housing services to account, reviewing policy development and monitoring performance of the housing function.
- 3.2 The appointment of a temporary Chair meets the requirements of relevant legislation and the Constitution. A political balance check has been undertaken and confirms that the proposal does not alter the membership of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee, does not change the allocation of committee seats between political groups, and therefore has no effect on the Council's political proportionality arrangements.

#### **4. Options**

- 4.1 Option 1: Appoint a temporary Chair which enables the committee to continue its work programme effectively and that meetings can be conducted with clear leadership.
- 4.2 Option 2: Do nothing – this will require an appointment of Chair to be made at each meeting by way of a motion without notice but does not provide leadership of the committee.
- 4.3 Option 1 is the preferred option.

#### **5. Relevance to Council Plan/priorities**

Set out how report links to the Council Plan/priorities:

- ☐ A supported and engaged community that has the right homes in the right places, with appropriate infrastructure
- ☐ A sustainable environment that is moving towards carbon neutrality and which promotes ecological recovery.
- ☐ A vibrant and resilient economy that supports local business, provides local jobs and leads to a reduction in poverty and inequality.
- ☒ A well-managed, financially secure and continuously improving council that delivers quality services

#### **6. Financial Comments/Implications**

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications.

#### **7. Legal Comments/Implications**

- 7.1 The Constitution requires that the appointment of a Chair or Vice Chair of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee is reserved to Council to determine.
- 7.2 The appointment of a Vice Chair can be dealt with by way of a Motion Without Notice as set out in the Constitution (Council Procedure Rules Part 4: Motion Without Notice), where this is required.
- 7.3 The rules governing the allocation of seats on Committees and Sub-Committees to political groups are set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and regulations made thereunder including the Local

Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. The provisions of the 1989 Act include the requirement that, where Members of the Council are divided into political groups, then the membership of its committees and sub-committees must reflect the political balance of the Council as a whole. The political balance check confirms that this proposal relates only to the temporary appointment of a Chair from within the existing committee membership and does not create, remove or reallocate any committee seat. The proposals set out in this report therefore comply with the Council's Constitution and meet the requirements of the relevant legislation.

## 8. Risk Implications

- 8.1 There is a risk that, without the appointment of a temporary Chair, the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee may experience a lack of leadership during meetings and in preparation ahead of meetings, which could impact the effective delivery of its work programme. This risk is mitigated by appointing a temporary Chair in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

## 9. Equality Implications (Public Sector Equality Duty)

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| <b>Scope</b> <i>(Provide an overview, including objectives and desired outcomes)</i>                                                                                | <b>Appointment of Chair for the Housing Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Evidence gathered and engagement</b> <i>(List stakeholders consulted and relevant processes, policies, and data sources)</i>                                     | Consultation with Democratic Alliance Group                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Relevance assessment findings</b> <i>(If relevant to equality, undertake a full EIA or If no relevance to equality, explain why with supporting information)</i> | <p>A full EIA is required: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, this assessment has demonstrated relevance to equality with regard to:<br/>Please check relevant boxes</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Age                      <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and maternity<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Disability              <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Race                      <input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Sex                      <input type="checkbox"/> Marriage or Civil Partnership<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief      <input type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Other, e.g. carers, care leavers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc. </p> <p>If no, explain why:<br/>There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report.</p> |
| <b>Relevance ranking</b>                                                                                                                                            | <input type="checkbox"/> High – Very relevant to protected characteristics<br><input type="checkbox"/> Medium – Somewhat relevant to protected characteristics<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Low – Not relevant to protected characteristics                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Key findings and impacts</b>                                                                                                                                     | There are none.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Conclusion drawn</b> ( <i>i.e No major changes needed; EIA found no negative impact or adjust policy/process to remove identified barriers</i> ) | The appointment ensure the committee can continue to function effectively. |
| <b>Actions</b> ( <i>Proposed actions to mitigate negative impacts on identified groups</i> )                                                        | None.                                                                      |
| <b>Signed off by</b>                                                                                                                                | Andrew Melhuish                                                            |

## **10. HR and Workforce Implications**

10.1 There are none.

## **11. Community Safety Implications (Crime and Disorder)**

11.1 There are no Community Safety Implications.

## **12. Climate Change Implications**

12.1 There are no Climate Change Implications.

## **13. Health & Safety and Health & Wellbeing Implications**

13.1 There are no Health & Safety implications.

13.2 There are no Health & Wellbeing Implications.

## **14. Procurement and Social Value implications**

14.1 None.

## **15. Land and Buildings (non-housing)/Asset Management Implications**

15.1 None.

## **16. Overview and Scrutiny Committees Comments/Recommendations**

16.1 None.

## **17. Digital and Data**

17.1 None.

## **18. Consultation and Engagement**

18.1 Consultation with the Democratic Alliance Group undertaken to ensure the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee has arrangements in place to be effectively chaired during the current absence of the substantive Chair.

## **19. Communications**

19.1 None.

**20. Next Steps**

20.1 Update the Council's website with details of this temporary arrangement and to notify the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee that this is in place.

**21. Appendices**

21.1 None.

**22. Background Papers**

22.1 None.