

ANNUAL MEETING OF MEDWAY COUNCIL

22 MAY 2019

POLITICAL ASSISTANTS

Report from: Neil Davies, Chief Executive

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Summary

This report asks the Council to make a decision in respect of the allocation of Political Assistant posts to each of the qualifying political groups represented on the Council.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 The allocation of Political Assistant posts is a matter for the Annual Meeting of the Council.

2. Background

2.1 A Local Authority has the power under section 9 of The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (the Act) to create up to three assistants for political groups subject to certain qualifying criteria. Under the Act a political group qualifies for a post if:

- (a) the membership of that group comprises at least one-tenth of the membership of the authority;
- (b) the number of other groups (if any) which are larger than that group does not exceed two; and
- (c) where the number of the other groups which are the same size as or larger than that group exceed two, the authority have determined that that group should be a group to which a post is allocated.

2.2 Currently two Political Assistants are in post; one each for the Conservative and Labour groups.

- 2.3 Section 9 of the Act and the Council's own Constitution prohibit the Council from:
- 2.3.1 making an appointment to any Political Assistant post unless and until it has formally allocated a Political Assistant to each of the qualifying groups;
 - 2.3.2 allocating a post to a political group which does not qualify for one or;
 - 2.3.3 allocating more than one post to any political group.
- 2.4 The decision on whom to select for appointment is made in accordance with the wishes of the political group in question. It is however a matter for the Council as the employer to decide the terms on which the Political Assistant is employed.
- 2.5 Following the Council election on 2 May 2019 and in accordance with the Act and the Council's Constitution, the Conservative and Labour groups will be entitled to a Political Assistant.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1 Salaries for Political Assistants are met from within existing budget provision.

4. Legal implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are set out in the body of the report.

5. Risk management

- 5.1 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 The Council is asked to allocate Political Assistant posts to the Conservative and Labour groups.

Background papers

None

Contact for further details

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