

COUNCIL
29 JANUARY 2026

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

**TITLE OF REPORT: APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE, MEMBER, CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE FINANCE, AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE
(AND NOTING THE APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER OF COUNCIL, APPOINTMENT OF A NEW EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS)**

REPORT OF: Democratic Services Manager

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: N/A

COUNCIL PRIORITY: THRIVING COMMUNITIES / ACCESSIBLE SERVICES / RESPONSIBLE GROWTH / SUSTAINABILITY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to confirm the appointment of a new / replacement Member, Substitute Member/s, Chair and Vice Chair to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.
- 1.2 This follows the appointment of Councillor Sean Nolan, the current Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, to the position of Executive Member for Customer Experience and the Deputy Leader of the Council, who resigned from the Committee on 19 January 2026.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year, Council appoints Members to the following vacancies on the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee:
- One Member vacancy (Labour and Cooperative).
 - One Substitute Member vacancy (Labour and Cooperative).
 - One Substitute Member vacancy (Conservative).
- 2.2. That Councillor Vijaiya Poopalasingham be appointed as the Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year.
- 2.3. That Councillor Sarah Lucas be appointed as the Vice-Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year.
- 2.4. That Council note the appointment of Councillor Sean Nolan as the Executive Member for Customer Experience and Deputy Leader for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year.
- 2.5. That Council note the appointment of Councillor Val Bryant as Member Representative and Councillor Sean Nolan as reserve Member Representative on the Outside Organisations 'Herts Leaders Group' and 'East of England Leaders Group'.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. To comply with the provisions of 4.8.1 (a) (vii), (viii) and (ix) of the Council's Constitution following Councillor Sean Nolan resigning from the Committee / position of Chair of Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and appointment as the Deputy Leader / Executive Member for Customer Experience.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. That the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee operate without a Chair, and the Vice Chair presides at each meeting, if present, and if not a Member of the Committee is elected as Chair for that meeting only.
- 4.2. This option is not recommended as the efficient conduct of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee requires significant co-ordination between Officers and the Chair and it would not be possible to adequately prepare for meetings in the absence of a consistent elected Chair, particularly given that the Committee will be considering the budget at its next meeting.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1. The vacancy is within the Labour and Cooperative party therefore the Leader of Council and the Group have given consideration and will make nominations to the vacant positions.
- 5.2. Executive appointments are a matter for the Leader of Council.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1. Following the election of Councillor Val Bryant as Leader of the Council at the Extraordinary Council meeting on Tuesday 13 January 2026, it was advised that Councillor Sean Nolan would become the Deputy Leader of the Council.
- 7.2. Whilst not a requirement, Councillor Nolan submitted his resignation as Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee on Monday 19 January 2026. Therefore, a new Chair of this Committee is required, as well as an additional Member / Substitute appointed from the Labour and Co-Operative Group to fill this vacancy.
- 7.3. Since Annual Council there remains a substitute Conservative vacancy on the Committee, therefore, should the Conservative Group wish to appoint to this vacancy it presents an opportune time.
- 7.4. Councillor Val Bryant, as Leader of the Council, has advised that Councillor Nolan will also take on the Executive Member for Customer Experience role at Cabinet. Therefore, Appendix A includes the formal notice of this, which Council is asked to note.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Director and Democratic Services Manager, by way of sub delegation, can make in year changes to the membership of Committees (not Chair or Vice Chair). However, for completeness the changes to the membership, substitutes, Chair and Vice Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee have been contained within this report.
- 8.2 The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee itself only has the power to elect a Chair from its membership for the duration of a single meeting.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. The legal and constitutional requirements are set out in the main body of this report.

- 9.2. 14.6.9 (a) Delegation of Authority – Director: Governance of the Constitution states:

(xix) To make appointments (or where relevant nominate) Councillors or Substitutes to Committees, Sub-Committees, panels, boards and outside bodies, in consultation with Group Leaders during the civic year in respect of the appointments that have previously been made at Annual Council.

- 9.3 Sub delegation to Democratic Services Manager under 1.14.1 of officer's delegations:

e) The appointment, nomination or revocation of appointment of any individual to any office/ body other than to Full Council in the event of vacation of office, in consultation with Group Leaders in respect of elected Councillors (In accordance with any requirements under the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, or any legislation replacing the same under section 14.5.1 of the Constitution.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 11.2. The efficient conduct of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee requires significant co-ordination between Officers and the Chair and it would not be possible to adequately prepare for meetings in the absence of a consistent elected Chair, particularly given that the Committee will be considering the budget at its next meeting, prior to Council approval in February.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 There are no direct equalities implications arising from this report.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. The Social Value Act and “go local” requirements do not apply to this report.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no human resource implications.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 Appendix A – Cabinet Appointments for the remainder of the 2025/26 civic year.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 None.