

<b>Meeting:</b>	Executive
<b>Meeting date:</b>	12 September 2024
<b>Report of:</b>	Bryn Roberts – Director of Governance
<b>Portfolio of:</b>	Councillor Douglas - Executive Leader

## **Decision Report: Lord Mayoralty Points Allocation**

### **Subject of Report**

1. To invite the Executive to consider a request to reinstate unspent points foregone in respect of a previous Lord Mayoralty allocation in 2019/2020, and to consequently amend the forthcoming Lord Mayoralty allocations accordingly, to take effect for the forthcoming municipal year, 2025/2026.

### **Benefits and Challenges**

2. A clear and simple process for the selection of a Lord Mayor is essential in the interests of public transparency and secures the full and proper engagement of all parties in the appointment of a Lord Mayor for the City. Failure to adopt a universally accepted process would potentially arise in disputes regarding the integrity of any appointments made.
3. However, there must also be a degree of fairness applied to such allocations; where a minority group is unable to nominate a member, consideration should be given to the allocated points 'rolling over' to a future year.

### **Policy Basis for Decision**

4. The appointment of the Lord Mayor in York is a fundamental part of the city's continuing historic traditions. The role of Lord Mayor is firmly enshrined in the Council's Constitution, as an ambassador for the city and its cultural and economic ambitions. As such, the

appointee will play an active part in promoting all the Council's priorities. Whilst the qualification requirements for nominations for the Lord Mayoralty are set out in Article 5 of the Constitution, the procedure for arriving at such nominations is not prescribed in the Constitution.

## **Financial Strategy Implications**

5. There are no financial strategy implications arising from this report.

## **Recommendation and Reasons**

6. Members are asked to consider the information presented in paragraphs 6 to 13 below, and to determine whether they wish to implement the requested reallocation of unspent points to the Conservative Group for the 2019/2020 nomination to the current points calculation, such reinstatement to take effect for the 2025/2026 municipal year.

Reason: To ensure the fairness of approach which is appropriate in the nomination of Lord Mayors for Office.

## **Background**

7. The system for nominating the Lord Mayor is based on an accumulation of points determined by the number of seats held by each group or individual on the Council. The group (or individual) having the largest cumulative total of points on Lord Mayor's Day each year is invited to nominate the Lord Mayor for the following year. It should be noted that currently a nominee for Lord Mayor requires at least four years' service as a City of York Councillor and should be elected to serve a further term, as set out in Article 5 of the Constitution.
8. Should a group lose all its seats on the City Council, it may have any accumulated points frozen until seats are once again gained by that group on the Council.
9. A group (or individual) loses 47 points when nominating the Lord Mayor or when not taking up the offer of nominating. Under the current points system, the number of points accumulated by each group or independent Member, as we move towards the Annual Meeting in May 2025, is as follows:

Party	Points at LM Day 2024	Loss for LM 2024/2025	Points at LM Day 2025	Total
Labour	42	-47	-5 + 24	19
Lib Dem	-5		-5 + 19	14
Conservatives	10		10 + 3	13
Councillor Warters (Independent)	-35		-35 +1	-34

10. The above table shows that, without adjustment, the Labour Group, with 19 points, will qualify for the Lord Mayoralty in 2025/2026 under the existing points system.
11. Notwithstanding this, however, the Conservative Group has submitted a request to have its previous points deduction (-47 points for the year 2019/2020) reinstated on a one-off basis. The reason given for this is that whilst the Conservative Group was invited to nominate to the Lord Mayoralty for the year 2019/2020, it had no members who were able to take up the role for that year.
12. Members may be aware that the Conservative Group allocation was made at an Executive meeting held on 28 November 2018; at that point, the Conservative Group comprised 14 members. However, following the elections in May 2019 the Conservative Group size had reduced to two members. Of those two members, one was newly elected and therefore ineligible, and the other was eligible but unable to secure the necessary release from employment to be able to perform the duties of Lord Mayor as the role demanded.
13. The position is now that changed, and the Conservative Group has therefore asked that those points be reallocated. Were that to be done, and the points applied to the 2025/2026 year, the results would be as follows:

Party	Points at LM Day 2024	Loss for LM 2024/2025	Points at LM Day 2025	Total
Labour	42	-47	-5 + 24	19
Lib Dem	-5		-5 + 19	14
Conservatives	10		10 + 3 + 47	60

Councillor Warters (Independent)	-35		-35 +1	-34
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14. This would result in the Conservative Group, with 60 points, qualifying for the Lord Mayoralty in 2025/2026.
15. For the sake of clarity, this reallocation would be applied to cover the situation where a minority group (or an individual) is unable to nominate a member due to pre-existing work and personal commitments; where a group (or an individual) is able to nominate a suitable member but chooses not to do so, the points reallocation would be unlikely to be appropriate; however, any future requests for points reallocations would be considered on their facts.

## Consultation Analysis

16. Prior to the preparation of the report, the views of the Group Leaders have been sought. The Labour and Conservative Group leaders have expressed agreement with the proposed adjustment to the current points scores; the Liberal Democrat Group leader has expressed opposition to the adjustment.
17. Once determined, the qualifying Group will undertake its own consultative exercises within the Group as part of its process for securing its nominee for the role. Once the Group has reached an agreement for its nomination to the Office of Lord Mayor, the Leader of the Group will make a formal announcement with their nominee at a forthcoming meeting of the Council, prior to the Annual Meeting being held.

## Options Analysis

18. Members have two options in respect of the request. They may:
  - a. decide to reallocate the relevant unspent points to the Conservative Group, as requested; this would likely result in an invitation to the Conservative Group to consider a nomination for the office of Lord Mayor for the Municipal Year 2025/2026; or
  - b. decide that given the passage of time since the Conservative Group's loss of points, it would not be reasonable to

reallocate the points; this would result in an invitation to the Labour Group to consider their nomination for the office of Lord Mayor for the Municipal Year 2025/2026

19. Members are therefore asked to consider the information provided and decide whether or not to reallocate the lost points.

## **Organisational Impact and Implications**

20. There are no direct implications in relation to financial, human resources, legal or equalities arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **Risks and Mitigations**

21. There are no specific risks associated with this decision, as there will be a Group which receives the right to nominate to the role of Lord Mayor irrespective of the decision taken.

## **Wards Impacted**

22. All Wards.

## **Contact details**

For further information please contact the authors of this Decision Report.

### **Author**

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<b>Service Area:</b>	Democratic Services
<b>Report approved:</b>	Yes
<b>Date:</b>	17 June 2024

## **Background papers**

- None