

**19 May 2021**

## **APPOINTMENT OF POLITICAL ASSISTANTS**

### **1 Background**

- 1.1 This report invites the County Council to consider whether or not to continue with the appointment of Political Assistants.
- 1.2 Political Assistants have been employed by the County Council since 2002. Political Assistants are unique among officers of local government. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Section 9) makes provision for staff to be appointed with specific regard to their political affiliation, for the purpose of giving political advice and support to the political groups that qualify for such support and which agree to have such support. The maximum salary is determined by the Local Government (Assistants for Political Groups) (Remuneration) (England) Order 2006. The maximum salary applicable from 1 April 2021 is £34,986.
- 1.3 The legislation restricts Political Assistants to the three largest political groups and only political groups with at least 10% of the total number of seats on the Council qualify for this support. With 53 Members, the threshold is groups with at least six members.
- 1.4 The Political Assistants work directly for the political groups. From an organisational perspective they sit within Democratic Services and are line managed by the Head of Democratic Services, although their day-to-day activities are overseen by the relevant Group Leader.
- 1.5 The legislation prescribes that these posts are appointed up until the Annual Meeting of the Council in an election year.

### **2 Decision**

To consider whether or not to appoint Political Assistants for qualifying political groups.

Simon Harper  
Head of Democratic Services  
Email: [simon.harper@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:simon.harper@gloucestershire.gov.uk)