



Subject:	Introduction of a System of Proportionality for the Position of High Sheriff
Date:	22 nd September, 2017
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	As above

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To consider the introduction of a system of proportionality for the identification of candidates for consideration for appointment to the Office of High Sheriff.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is requested to consider the matter and to advise if it wishes to introduce a system of proportionality for the position of High Sheriff. If so, the Committee is requested to consider also whether such a system should be introduced for the next Council Term commencing in 2019 or to introduce it now for the remainder of the existing Council Term.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p data-bbox="272 255 421 286"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="165 322 1471 421">3.1.1 A question has been raised as to whether the Council could and should introduce a system of proportionality to identify those Parties which would be entitled to nominate a person to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for consideration for appointment as High Sheriff.</p> <p data-bbox="165 456 1471 519">3.1.2 In short, the Council could decide to do this if it so wishes. However, in considering whether it should do so the Committee should take account of the following points.</p> <p data-bbox="165 555 1471 788">3.1.3 The position of High Sheriff is not one which is within the Council’s gift. Rather, the appointment is made by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland who, each year, requests the Council to provide him/her with the names of 3 persons suitable for appointment. For many years now, the process which the Council has used to do this is for one name only to be provided and the name of that person is decided by the Council at a full Council meeting. Where more than one candidate is nominated, the Council votes and the person who receives the most votes is duly nominated.</p> <p data-bbox="165 824 1471 985">3.1.4 The position of High Sheriff is not a “Position of Responsibility” as defined in the Local Government Act (NI) 2014 and therefore the Council is not required to use a system of proportionality to make the nominations. However, the Council could decide to use the same system of proportionality as it does for these Positions of Responsibility when deciding on whom to nominate for High Sheriff.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1021 1471 1227">3.1.5 The Positions of Responsibility are allocated at the first annual meeting of the Council following a Local Council election for each year of the 4-year Term. The Council could decide to apply the D’hondt system to the nomination of candidates for High Sheriff as a separate pool of 4 positions. If this had been applied at the start of the current Council Term then, given the strengths of the Political parties as at the elections in 2014, the 4 choices would have fallen to:</p> <ol data-bbox="325 1263 453 1496" style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SF 2. DUP 3. SF 4. ALL 5. SDLP 6. UUP 7. DUP <p data-bbox="165 1532 1471 1630">3.1.6 In the past, both Sinn Fein and SDLP have not nominated anyone as a candidate for High Sheriff and, if that had continued, then the 4 Parties which would have been entitled to nominate a candidate and which would wish to avail of that choice would have been:</p> <ol data-bbox="325 1666 437 1800" style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DUP 2. ALL 3. UUP 4. DUP <p data-bbox="165 1836 1471 1899">3.1.7 Of course, it would have been a matter for a political party to choose which of the 4 years it wished when it was their turn to choose.</p>

3.1.8	Should the Council decide to introduce proportionality from the start of the next Council Term in 2019 then, of course, the Parties which would be eligible to nominate a candidate would be dependent upon the outcome of the Local Election.
3.1.9	The Council could decide to examine the Parties that have already nominated to the position so far in this Term (Alderman Rodgers – UUP in 2016 and Alderman Haire – DUP in 2017) and then to allocate the remaining two nominations in this Term to the Parties which had choices left under the D’hondt system, which would mean that the following two nominations would fall to Alliance and DUP.
3.2	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u>
3.2.1	None associated with this report.
3.3	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u>
3.3.1	None associated with this report