

SUBJECT	Political Balance
REPORT OF	Steve Bambrick, Acting Chief Executive
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WARD/S AFFECTED	Not ward specific

1. Purpose of Report

To note the change to the political balance of the Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

- That Council notes the revised political balance and agrees that there be no changes to committee appointments.**

2. Reasons for Recommendations

Councillors Titterington, Shepherd and Garth resigned from the Conservative Group on 26 September, 30 October and 4 November 2019 respectively. The Council is therefore required to consider a report on the resulting change to the political balance of the Council.

3. Political Balance

3.1. The Council's political balance from 4 November 2019 is as follows:

Conservatives – 35 Councillors
 Liberal Democrat – 2 Councillors
 Independent Conservative (not a political group) – 1 Councillor
 Independent (not a political group) – 2 Councillors

3.2. The total number of seats to be allocated to the Conservative group is 87.5%; with the Liberal Democrat group allocated 5%.

3.3. As a political group requires a minimum of two members, Councillors Titterington (Independent Conservative), Garth and Shepherd (Independent) for political balance purposes, are treated as non-aligned councillors. Regulation 16 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 modifies sections 15 and 16 of LGHA 1989 to require a proportional allocation of seats to non-aligned Councillors. Councillors Garth, Titterington and Shepherd are therefore

entitled to 7 seats between them (7.5% of the Council's 100 committee seats). The selection of which non-aligned councillors fill those seats is up to the Council.

3.4. Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires seats to be allocated on ordinary Committees and Sub-Committees (where appropriate) in accordance with the following principles:

First Principle

'Not all seats are allocated to the same Political Group'

This means that all ordinary Committees and Sub-Committees must consist of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats.

Second Principle

'The majority of seats are to be allocated to the Majority Political Group'

This means that the majority of seats on ordinary Committees and Sub-Committees are to be allocated to the Conservative Group. It also means a clear majority in practice – without the use of a second vote.

Third Principle

'Subject to the First and Second Principles, the total number of seats each political group has on all ordinary committees shall be in proportion to the proportion of seats that it has on full Council'

This means that for each politically balanced Committee, the Conservatives are entitled to 87.5% of the seats and the Liberal Democrats are entitled to 5%. The table below details the entitlement of both Political Groups corresponding to the total number of seats available on a Committee.

Committee Seats	Conservative Seats	Lib Dem Seats
100	87.50	5.00
15	13.13	0.75
14	12.25	0.70
13	11.38	0.65
12	10.50	0.60
11	9.63	0.55
10	8.75	0.50
9	7.88	0.45
8	7.00	0.40
7	6.13	0.35
6	5.25	0.30
5	4.38	0.25
4	3.50	0.20
3	2.63	0.15

Fourth Principle

'Subject to the First, Second and Third Principles, each political group shall have the same proportion of seats as it holds on the council as a whole'

This means that subject to the other principles, the total seats that each Political Group has shall correspond to the total seats on Full Council.

The following table shows the proposed allocation of seats for both the Conservative Group and the Liberal Democrat Group.

	40 Places	Conservative			Lib Dems			Non-aligned Councillors		
		Seats		35	Seats		2	Seats		3
		%		87.50%	%		5.00%	%		7.50%
		Proposed	Ent.	Round	Proposed	Ent.	Round	Proposed	Ent.	Round
Appeals and Complaints	11	9	9.63	10	1	0.55	1	1	0.83	1
Audit and Standards	9	8	7.88	8	1	0.45	1	0	0.68	1
Governance and Electoral Arrangements	11	10	9.63	10	1	0.55	1	0	0.83	1
Licensing	15	13	13.13	13	1	0.75	1	1	1.13	1
Resources Overview	15	13	13.13	13	1	0.75	1	1	1.13	1
Services Overview	15	12	13.13	13	1	0.75	1	2	1.13	1
Planning	13	11	11.38	11	1	0.65	1	1	0.98	1
Joint Staffing	6	5	5.25	5	1	0.30	1	0	0.45	0
Joint Overview	5	4	4.38	4	1	0.25	1	0	0.38	0
TOTALS	100	85	87.50	87	9	5.00	9	6	7.50	7
ACTUAL TOTALS	100	85	85%		9	9%		6*	6%	

*Although the non-aligned Councillors are not a political group there is a requirement for non-aligned Councillors to have the same proportion of seats on Committees as they have seats on the Council. It is for Council to decide how seats for non-aligned Councillor are allocated. The table above reflects the current allocation of seats.

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 Financial

The recommendation in this report has no direct financial implications and can be met within existing budgets.

7.2 Legal

The Council is required to review the allocation of seats to committees whenever there is a change to political balance.

8. Links to Council Policy Objectives

Ensuring representation on the Council's Committees, outside bodies and informal meetings supports the delivery of the Council's key objectives.

9. Next Steps

If required, the record of appointments to committees will be updated accordingly.

Background Papers:	None other than those referred to in the report.
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