

## **ALLOCATION OF SEATS AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS**

### **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 In accordance with Section 15(1)(b) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, The Council must review the representation of political groups on committees at the annual meeting each year or as soon as practicable thereafter. For this purpose, “committees” includes the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Panels but excludes the Cabinet.
- 1.2 There are four statutory principles of political balance which have to be applied in filling appointments to Committees. These are contained in Section 15(5) of the Act.
- 1.3 The principles that have to be applied are as follows:-
  - (a) that not all seats on the body are allocated to the same political group;
  - (b) that the majority of the seats on the body are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group are a majority of the Authority’s membership;
  - (c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant Authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that Authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority; and
  - (d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the same number of all seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority.
- 1.4 Once the Council has determined the allocation of committee places between the political groups, the Council must then appoint the nominees of the political groups to the committees.
- 1.5 Those members who are not members of political groups have no legal entitlement to an allocation of seats on committees. However, the political groups are entitled to their proportion of seats and once their entitlement has been reached, the remaining seats may be filled by members not belonging to a political group. Such Members are classed as being non-aligned.
- 1.6 These provisions need not be applied if a different position is agreed without any member of the authority voting against.

### **2. CURRENT POSITION**

- 2.1 The political balance of the Council stands at:-

Conservative Group 45 (75.00%)

Liberal Democrat Group 13 (21.67%)

Non-aligned Members 2

### 3. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND PANELS

3.1 There are 111 Committee/Panel seats to which appointments should be made under the principles of proportionality.

3.2 The application of the percentages outlined at paragraph 2.1, to the number of seats on individual Committees gives the following allocation of seats:-

<b>Committee/Panel</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	<b>Unallocated Seats</b>
Appeals Committee	20	15	4	1
Audit Committee	8	6	2	-
General Purposes and Licensing Committee	15	11	3	1
HR Committee	8	6	2	-
Planning Committee	20	15	4	1
Community and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Community, Partnerships and Wellbeing)	10	8	2	-
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Corporate Affairs and Local Economy)	10	8	2	-
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment and Sustainability)	10	8	2	-
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Housing and Homelessness)	10	8	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>

3.3 The allocation of seats in accordance with the current political balance of the Council, leaves an unallocated seat on each of the Appeals Committee, General Purposes and Licensing Committee and Planning Committee.

3.4 The Council could resolve to allocate a seat(s) to the non-aligned Members. As at May 2021, both of the non-aligned Members have indicated that they would take up a seat(s) if allocated by the Council and the Council's Constitution makes provision for the allocation of seats to Members who are not members of a political group, as nearly as possible in proportion to the number of those members on the Council.

3.5 Therefore, a recommended allocation of seats is outlined below:-

<b>Committee/Panel</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	<b>Non-aligned</b>
Appeals Committee	20	15	4	1
Audit Committee	8	6	2	-
General Purposes and Licensing Committee	15	11	3	1
HR Committee	8	6	2	-
Planning Committee	20	15	4	1
Community and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Community,	10	8	2	-

Partnerships and Wellbeing)				
Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Corporate Affairs and Local Economy)	10	8	2	-
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environment and Sustainability)	10	8	2	-
Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Housing and Homelessness)	10	8	2	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>

3.6 The nominees of the political groups to the Committees and Panels will be tabled at the meeting, alongside the preferences of the non-aligned Members.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

#### **5. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no environmental implications arising directly from this report.

#### **7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Political balance ensures that Committees and Panels are representative of the wishes of the electorate.

#### **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the allocation of seats to committees and panels in accordance with the principles set out in the report, be agreed as at the table at paragraph 3.5 of this report; and

8.2 That the Council gives effect to the wishes of the political groups in making appointments to these Committees and Panels, for the remainder of the four year period ending May 2023.

#### **For further information contact:**

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#### **Background Papers:**

Local Government and Housing Act 1989