

Report to Council

Subject: Political Balance and Allocation of Seats to Committees

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1. Purpose of the Report

To revise the allocation of seats to Council Committees in response to a change of Membership of the Conservative Group.

2. Background

In determining the membership of committees, account must be taken of the requirements of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and 1991 made under sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. These regulations require that seats on committees and sub-committees are allocated to the political groups in a way which reflects the overall political balance of the Council. A political group is defined as a group consisting of two or more members. Following Councillor Hewson's decision to leave the Conservative Group and sit as an Independent Member, the political make-up of the Council is as follows:

Labour	25
Conservative	15
Liberal Democrat	1
Independent	1

There are a total of 79 committee seats to be allocated for the remainder of 2017/18 municipal year. The allocation of seats on the committees and sub-committees of the Council is, therefore, as follows:

Committee	Total Seats	Lab	Con
Planning	16	10	6
Environment and Licensing	11	7	4
Licensing Act Committee	11	7	4

Appeals and Retirements	7	5	2
Joint Consultative and Safety Committee	7	5	2
Audit Committee	7	4	3
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	13	9	4
Appointments and Conditions of Service	7	4	3

Members will be aware that a unanimous decision was taken by Council in 2012 to set up a Standards Committee which is not politically balanced. A decision to reverse this would need to be considered by Full Council. Accordingly it is not included in the above calculations.

3. Proposal

The following changes to Committee memberships need to be made in order to ensure that the allocation of seats to committees remains politically balanced until the annual meeting on 23 May 2018:

- To nominate a member of the Conservative Group to the Environment and Licensing and Licensing Act Committees.
- To nominate a member of the Labour Group to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in place of a member of the Conservative Group.
- To nominate a member of the Labour Group to the Appeals and Retirements Committee in place of a member of the Conservative Group.

4. Recommendations

In accordance with nominations made by Business Managers, Council is RECOMMENDED to:

- 1) Appoint a member of the Labour Group to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- 2) Appoint a member of the Labour Group to the Appeals and Retirements Committee;
- 3) Remove a member of the Conservative Group from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- 4) Remove a member of the Conservative Group from the Appeals and Retirements Committee; and
- 5) Appoint a Member of the Conservative Group to the Environment and Licensing and Licensing Act Committees.