



Committee and date

Council

12 May 2011

10.00 a.m.

Item No

10

Public

CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

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1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report deals with the overall constitution of committees, the overall entitlement of seats for each of the political groups and the proportionate allocation of seats between the groups across all committees.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Council confirms the constitution of committees and the allocation of seats to each of the political groups for the 2011/12 municipal year and the allocation of seats between the political groups, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to this report.

REPORT

3.0 Local Government and Housing Act 1989

- 3.1 The provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 require the Council to review the representation of each political group on committees, panels etc. at each annual meeting or as soon as practicable after that meeting. The regulations require that all Scrutiny, Standing and Regulatory Committees are politically balanced across the total number of committee places. Subject to that overriding requirement, each committee must also be politically balanced, as far as it is reasonably practicable.
- 3.2 The Executive (Cabinet) is not subject to the political balance rules and neither is the Standards Committee.

3.3 Advisory Committees and other ad hoc bodies and groups are not subject to the political balance rules either, but traditionally political proportionality has been applied to them outside the overall aggregate balance referred to in paragraph 2.1 above.

4.0 Constitution of Committees

4.1 The Council is requested to approve the overall constitution of committees following the approved changes in relation to both the planning and licensing functions and the dissolution of the Economic Development Committee with immediate effect.

4.2 This requires 81 seats to be allocated proportionately across all committees and the Council is requested to approve the overall constitution as set out below:

<u>Committee Name</u>	<u>Seats per Committee</u>
Healthy Communities Scrutiny Committee	10
Performance and Strategy Scrutiny Committee	10
Protecting and Enhancing our Environment Scrutiny Committee	10
Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee	10
Safe and Confident Communities Scrutiny Committee	10
Pensions Committee	4
Audit Committee	5
Human Resources Committee	7
Strategic Licensing Committee	15
Total	<u>81</u>

5.0 Allocation of Seats

5.1 The Council is required to approve the allocation of seats to the political groups for the coming years. In accordance with the changes referred to in paragraph 4.1 above, maximum number of seats available to each group within the political balance rules will be:

<u>Group Name</u>	<u>Seats per Group</u>
Conservatives	57
Liberal Democrats	14
Labour	8
Independent	2
Total	<u>81</u>

5.2 The proportionate allocation of seats to the political groups across all committees is set out in Appendix 1 and the proposed allocation of these totals to individual members, in accordance with the wishes of the respective Group Leaders, is set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

- 5.3 The Council is entitled to 11 seats on the Shropshire and Wrekin Combined Fire Authority. Under the present arrangements, the Conservative Group is entitled to 8 seats, the Liberal Democrat Group 2 seats and the Labour Group 1 seat.
- 5.4 Shropshire is entitled to 2 seats on the West Mercia Police Authority in accordance with the agreed formula which is based on the 9 seats being apportioned on the basis of population.
- 5.5 The proposed allocation of seats meets the legal requirements, however, should the Council wish, it is possible to agree allocations which are not strictly politically balanced if no member descents.

6.0 Appointment of Area Planning Committees

- 6.1 With regard to the allocation of seats of the area based Planning Committees (North, South and Central – 11 members of each) the Constitution requires members to be drawn from each of the individual areas, North, South and Central and for this reason the political balance rules have been disapplied. However, it has been agreed by Council that in order to recognise the local representation of each of the areas, the members of each of the Area Planning and Licensing Committees will reflect the political balance of each local area.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Regulations made thereunder

Human Rights Act Appraisal

The contents of this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights act 1998

Environmental Appraisal

Not Applicable

Risk Management Appraisal

The Council is obliged to ensure that the membership of committees and related bodies is proportionate to individual group membership.

Community / Consultations Appraisal

Not Applicable

Cabinet Member

Keith Barrow

Local Member

All

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Constitution of Committees and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups

Appendix 2 – Proposed Allocation of Seats to Political Groups