

CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

Responsible Officer Claire Porter

Email: claire.porter@shropshire.gov.uk

Telephone: (01743) 252763

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 2014/15 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, but the Standards Committee is required to be balanced.
- 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.
- 4.2 This requires 90 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>
Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee	10
Performance Management Scrutiny Committee	10
Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee	10
Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee	10
Young People's Scrutiny Committee	10
Pensions Committee	4
Audit Committee	5
Human Resources Committee	7
Strategic Licensing Committee	15
Standards Committee	9
Total	<u>90</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 year.
- 5.2 The recent Ludlow North by-election saw the Liberal Democrat Group gain the seat for that electoral division from the Conservative Group. Consequently the change in political balance has seen the Liberal Democrat Group gain an extra seat on the Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee taking their number of seats on this committee from one to two. The Conservatives lose one on Scrutiny from the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee which reduces their seats on the committee from 7 to 6. To balance the numbers a consensus has been reached amongst the Group Leaders for the Independents to lose their only seat on the Environment and Services Scrutiny Committee and have one seat on the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.3 In accordance with this change the 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	16
Labour	11
Independent	6
Total	<u>90</u>

- 5.4 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 (To Follow).
- 5.5 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 7 seats, the Liberal Democrat Group 2 seats, the Labour Group 1 seat and the Independent Group 1 seat.
- 5.6 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 dissents.

6.0 Appointment of Area Planning Committees

- 6.1 With regard to the allocation of seats on 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 Committees will reflect the political balance of each local area.

<p>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</p>
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<p>Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Regulations made thereunder.</p>

<p>Human Rights Act Appraisal</p>
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<p>The contents of this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights act 1998.</p>

<p>Environmental Appraisal: Not Applicable</p>

<p>Risk Management Appraisal</p>

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

<p>Community / Consultations Appraisal</p>

<p>Not Applicable</p>

<p>Cabinet Member: Keith Barrow</p>
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<p>Local Members: All</p>

<p>Appendices</p>

<p>Appendix 1 – Constitution of Committees and Allocation of Seats to Political Groups</p>
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<p>Appendix 2 – Proposed Allocation of Seats to Political Groups (To Follow)</p>
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