



Council

12 December 2024

Item

Public



CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO POLITICAL GROUPS

Responsible Officer:	Tim Collard		
email:	tim.collard@shropshire.gov.uk	Tel:	(01743) 252756
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Councillor Lezley Picton		

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 A recent change in group membership as a result of Councillors Steve Davenport and John Price joining the Independent Group requires amendments to the distribution of seats on committees, and other bodies to which proportionality rules apply.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 The Executive (Cabinet) is not subject to the political balance rules.

- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 The Council has been advised that Councillors Steve Davenport and John Price are no longer members of the Conservative Group and have joined the Independent Group.
- 2.5 Accordingly, it is necessary to review the membership of committees to reflect this change in the relative size of the political groups.
- 2.6 In order to accurately reflect the political balance of the authority, and to comply with the principles set out within the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, it is recommended that the following changes to the allocation of seats to political parties is approved:
- a. People Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 1 seat from Conservative to Independent
 - b. Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 1 seat from Conservative to Independent
 - c. Pensions Committee: 1 seat from Conservative to Labour
 - d. Strategic Licensing Committee: 1 seat from Conservative to Liberal Democrat
 - e. Standards Committee: 1 seat from Conservative to Green
 - f. Housing Board: 1 seat from Conservative to Independent
- 2.7 Membership of the Fire Authority is also required to comply with the political balance rules and should be amended as follows:

5 Conservative (-1), 2 Liberal Democrat, 1 Labour, 1 Independent and 1 Green (+1)

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the Council confirms the revised allocation of seats to each of the political groups for the remainder of the 2024/25 municipal year as a consequence of the change in group membership as follows:
- a) That the composition and revised allocation of seats on its committees and other bodies as detailed in the report be approved.

- b) That the Leader of the Conservative Group provides notification of which of its members will be removed as a member of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Pensions Committee, Strategic Licensing Committee, Standards Committee and Housing Board.

- c) That the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group provides notification of which of its members will be appointed as a member of the Strategic Licensing Committee.

- d) That the Leader of the Labour Group provides notification of which of its members will be appointed as a member of the Pensions Committee.

- e) That the Leader of the Independent Group provides notification of which of its members will be appointed as a member of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to the Housing Board.

- f) That the Leader of the Green Group provides notification of which of its members will be appointed as a member of the Standards Committee and to the Fire Authority.

3.2 That the membership of the fire Authority be amended as follows:

Conservative	5	(-1)
Liberal Democrats	2	
Labour	2	
Independent	1	
Green	1	(+1)

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

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

5. Financial Implications

5.1. The allocation of seats on Committees will have no obvious financial implications.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

6.1. The allocation of seats on Committees will have no obvious impact in terms of climate change.

7. Background

7.1 The Council is required to approve the allocation of seats to the political groups for the remainder of the coming year. In accordance with the Political Balance Rules, the revised maximum number of seats available to each of the groups will be:

Group Name	Seats per Group	
Conservatives	54	(-6)
Liberal Democrats	26	(+1)
Labour	15	(+1)
Independent	7	(+3)
Green	6	(+1)
Total	108	

7.2 The proportionate allocation of seats to the political groups across all committees is set out in Appendix 1.

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.

Local Member: All

Appendices

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

