

**Committee:** Annual Council

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 22 May 2007

**15**

**Title:** Political Balance on the Council

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Item for decision

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## Summary

This report considers the political composition of the Council and recommends that seats on the main committees be allocated to the three political groups as detailed in the report.

## Recommendations

That the Council reviews its political composition and achieves political balance by allocating seats on its main and other committee as detailed in the report.

## Background Papers

None

## Impact

Communication/Consultation	Political parties to consult within their groups to determine their views on the recommendation
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Finance	N/A
Human Rights	N/A
Legal Implications	To comply with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989
Ward-specific impacts	All

Workforce/Workplace	N/A
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## Situation

- 1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires local authorities to review the representation on them of different political groups at the Annual Meeting or as soon as practicable thereafter. It further require them to allocate the seats on their committees to political groups represented in accordance, so far as reasonably practicable, with the following four principles of proportionality:-
  - (a) that not all seats on the body concerned are allocated to the same political group;
  - (b) that the majority of the seats on the body is allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is 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 an 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;
  - (d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of the seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

## The Council

- 2 The Current political composition of the Council is as follows: -

Group	Members	Percentage	Total Seats
Conservative	26	59.09%	52
Liberal Democrat	15	34.09%	30
Independent	3	6.82%	6

- 3 For the purposes of allocating seats under the Act an individual councillor not within a recognised group of at least two members would not have automatic rights to be allocated seats on committees.

### 4 Allocation of Seats – Committees

Since the new constitution was adopted, it has been the convention for all Members to serve on at least one policy committee and one scrutiny or regulatory committee.

5 The current seats available on the Council's main committees are as follows:

Committee	Members
Operations	14
Community	15
Environment	15
Development Control	14
Licensing	11
Performance Select	8
Scrutiny	11
	88

6 Accordingly the Conservative Group is entitled to (52) of the 88 main committee seats available, the Liberal Democrat to (30), and the Independents to (6)

7 The allocation of the 88 seats could be as follows:

	Con	LD	Ind
<b>Policy Committees</b>			
Operations [14]	8	5	1
Environment [15]	9	5	1
Community [15]	9	5	1
<b>Regulatory/Scrutiny and Overview</b>			
Dev Control [14]	9	4	1
Licensing [11]	6	4	1
Scrutiny [11]	6	4	1
Perf. Select [8]	5	3	0

### Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating Actions
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A