

Committee: Annual Council
Title: Revised Political Balance – following the formation of the Thaxted and Eastons Independent Group
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Summary

1. This report considers the political composition of the Council following the resignations of Councillors Foley and Tayler from the Liberal Democrat Group, and the subsequent formation of the Thaxted and the Eastons Independent Group. The Group was formally established on Friday, 15 May 2020.
2. The Council's political composition is now 23 Residents for Uttlesford, 5 Liberal Democrats, 4 Conservatives, 2 Greens, 2 Uttlesford Independents and 2 Thaxted and the Eastons Independent Group.
3. The agenda papers for Annual Council were published on the Monday, 11 May and therefore the political balance calculation detailed in the initial report requires revision.

Recommendations

4. That the Council reviews its political composition and achieves political balance by allocating seats on its committees as set out in the report.

Financial Implications

5. None.

Background Papers

6. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

None.

Impact

- 7.

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	None

Equalities	To ensure political representation on the council's committees is proportional to the council's political composition.
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	To ensure compliance with the Local Government Housing Act 1989
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

8. Ahead of any decision by Council, it has been assumed the number of seats on ordinary committees of the Council (excluding Standards Committee) will be as follows:

Committee	Number of Seats
Governance, Audit and Performance	9
Licensing and Environmental Health	10
Planning	12
Scrutiny	10
Total	41

9. Based on the 41 seats, the number of seats available to each group is as follows:

Group	Percentage	Calculated Seats	Number of Seats
Residents for Uttlesford	60.53%	24.82	25
Liberal Democrats	13.16%	5.39	6
Conservative	10.53%	4.32	4
Uttlesford Independents	5.26%	2.16	2

Green Group	5.26%	2.16	2
Thaxted and the Eastons Independents	5.26%	2.16	2
Total	100%	41	41

Standards Committee

10. The Council's Constitution recognises that that the rules of political balance contained in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 apply but acknowledges that a politically balanced Standards Committee would be undesirable. It provides that subject to no member present voting against the proposal each political group on the Council would have at least one member on the Standards Committee. The aim is to achieve an even balance on the Committee.
11. Article 9 of the Constitution provides for three nominations for each political group, until the point when the Committee reaches a maximum of 9 members. As there are now 6 political groups it is proposed that membership of the Standards Committee should be allocated as follows:

Political Party	Number of Seats
Residents for Uttlesford	3
Liberal Democrats	2
Conservatives	1
Uttlesford Independents	1
Green Group	1
Thaxted and the Eastons Independents	1
Total	9

Proposal for Allocation of Seats

12. Group Leaders have seen the revised political balance calculation and have been asked to put forward proposals in regard to the allocation of the 41 seats. A consensus has been reached and officers have been presented with the following proposal:

Committee	R4U	LD	Con	Utt. Independent Group	Green	Thaxted and Easton Independent Group	Total
Governance, Audit and Performance	6	1	1	0	0	1	9
Licensing and Environmental Health	6	1	1	0	1	1	10
Planning	7	2	1	1	1	0	12
Scrutiny	6	2	1	1	0	0	10
Standards	3	2	1	1	1	1	9
Total	28	8	5	3	3	3	50

Risk Analysis

13. There are no risks associated with this report.