

**Committee:** Full Council

**Date:**

**Title:** Revised Political Balance 2021-22

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## Summary

1. This report considers the political composition of the Council and recommends that seats on the main committees be allocated to the five political groups as detailed in the report.
2. Following Councillor Isham's announcement that he had joined the Green Group on Friday, 14 May 2021, there is a need to revise the political balance calculation previously published.
3. The Council's political composition is 24 Residents for Uttlesford, 5 Liberal Democrats, 5 Conservatives, 3 Greens and 2 Uttlesford Independents.

## Recommendations

4. That the Council reviews its political composition and achieves political balance by allocating seats on its committees as detailed 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	Group Leaders have been informed of the political balance calculation.
Community Safety	None.
Equalities	None.
Health and Safety	None.

Human Rights/Legal Implications	The political balance calculation is in accordance with Local Government Housing Act 1989.
Sustainability	None.
Ward-specific impacts	None.
Workforce/Workplace	None.

## Situation

8. The Local Government Housing Act 1989 requires local authorities to review the representation of the different political groups at the Annual Meeting or as soon as practicable thereafter. It further requires 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.

9. Ahead of any decision by Council, the Leader has been proposed that 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	11
Scrutiny	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

10. The Leader has opted for a scheme which ensures each political group has a seat on the Planning Committee.

11. Based on the 40 seats, the number of seats available to each group is as follows:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Calculated Seats</b>	<b>Number of Seats</b>
Residents for Uttlesford	61.54%	24.61	25
Liberal Democrats	12.82%	5.12	5
Conservative	12.82%	5.12	5
Uttlesford Independents	5.13%	2.05	2
Green Group	7.69%	3.07	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>

### **Licensing and Environmental Health Committee**

12. The Licensing Committee cannot be taken into account for the purposes of the calculation because it is not a Committee to which the Local Government Act 1972 applies. However, it is proposed that the ten places available to be allocated to the Licensing Committee and agreed by Council be calculated on the same basis of proportionality applied to those Committees falling under the 1972 Act. It is a requirement that the Licensing Committee has between 10-15 members.

### **Standards Committee**

13. 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.

14. 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 5 political groups it is proposed that membership of the Standards Committee should be allocated as follows:

<b>Political Party</b>	<b>Number of Seats</b>
Residents for Uttlesford	3
Liberal Democrats	2
Conservatives	2
Uttlesford Independents	1
Green Group	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

### **Proposal for Allocation of Seats**

15. The allocation of the 49 seats is therefore proposed as follows:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>No. Seats Available</b>	<b>R4U</b>	<b>LDs</b>	<b>CONs</b>	<b>UTT INDs</b>	<b>Greens</b>
Governance, Audit and Performance	9	6	1	1	0	1
Licensing and Environmental Health	10	6	2	2	0	0
Planning	11	7	1	1	1	1
Scrutiny	10	6	1	1	1	1
Standards	9	3	2	2	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

### **Risk Analysis**

16. There are no risks associated with this report.