

**Committee:** Council

**Date:**

**Title:** Political Balance 2022-23

Tuesday, 21  
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## Summary

1. This report considers the political composition of the Council following the by-election on 5 January 2023 and recommends that seats on the main committees be allocated to the four political groups as detailed in the paragraph 13. Full Council agreed on 6 December 2022 that Group Leaders, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, would achieve political balance, allocate seats and make committee appointments as necessary.
2. Following the election of Councillor Thomas Loveday, Conservative and Unionist Party, in the ward of Great Dunmow South & Barnston, the Council's political composition is 23 Residents for Uttlesford, 8 Liberal Democrat and Green Alliance, 6 Conservatives and 2 Uttlesford Independents.

## Recommendations

3. That the Council notes:
  - I. The political balance and the allocation of seats on its committees as detailed in the report.
  - II. Committee appointments as confirmed by Group Leaders set out at Appendix A.

## Financial Implications

4. None.

## Background Papers

5. 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

- 6.

Communication/Consultation	Group Leaders have been informed of the political balance calculation.
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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

7. The Local Government Housing Act 1989 requires local authorities to review the representation of the different political groups and 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 are 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.
8. Following consideration of Group Leaders, 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 (GAP)	9
Licensing and Environmental Health	10

Planning	10
Scrutiny	10
Appointments Committee	7
Investigatory and Disciplinary Committee	5
Appeals Committee	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>

9. Based on the 56 seats, the number of seats available to each group is:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Calculated Seats</b>	<b>Number of Seats</b>
Residents for Uttlesford	58.97%	33.03	33
Liberal Democrat and Green Alliance	20.51%	11.49	11
Conservative	15.38%	8.62	9
Uttlesford Independents	5.13%	2.87	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>56</b>

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

10. 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**

11. 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.

12. 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 4 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 Democrat and Green Alliance	3
Conservatives	2
Uttlesford Independents	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

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

13. With the inclusion of the Standards Committee, the allocation of the 65 seats is therefore proposed as follows:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>No. Seats</b>	<b>R4U</b>	<b>LD &amp; GRN</b>	<b>CONs</b>	<b>IND</b>
Planning	10	6	2	1	1
Licensing and Environmental Health	10	6	2	2	0
Scrutiny	10	6	2	1	1
Appointments	7	4	1	1	1
GAP	9	5	2	2	0
IDC	5	3	1	1	0
AC	5	3	1	1	0
Standards	9	3	3	2	1
<b>Total seats</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>

### **Risk Analysis**

14. There are no risks associated with this report.