

20 March 2024		ITEM: 16
Council		
Revised Political Balance		
Wards and communities affected: None	Key Decision: Not Applicable	
Report of: Dave Smith, Chief Executive & Managing Director Commissioner		
Accountable Assistant Director: Not applicable		
Accountable Director: Daniel Fenwick, Executive Director, Corporate Services & Monitoring Officer		
This report is public		
Version: Final		

Executive Summary

This report requests the Council confirm the calculations relating to the allocation of seats on committees following the resignation of the following two councillors from the Conservative Group and becoming non-aligned independent Members:

- Councillor Jack Duffin
- Councillor Alex Anderson

Commissioner Comment:

None.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That the political balance and allocation of seats, as set out in Appendix 1, be noted.
- 1.2 That Group Leaders make any changes to seat allocations in accordance with the new proportionality.

Version Control (delete as appropriate)

Version 1 - First draft ready for DMT, SLT and Commissioner input; **Version 2** - Second Draft ready for Portfolio Holder, Leader and other Member Input; **Version 3** - Third draft for any further comments; **Version Committee** – Draft ready for submission to public committee; **Version Cabinet** – Final version ready for Cabinet/Executive decision

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Following the notification from Councillors Jack Duffin and Alex Anderson to the Proper Officer of their resignation from the Conservative Group the new political make-up of the council is:

Conservatives: 23

Labour: 19

Non-Political Alliance of Independent Councillors (NPAIC): 5

Independent: 2

2.2 Appendix 1 of this report shows the impact of this change on political balance. In summary the seat entitlement for the political groups will be:

Group	Previous Seat Entitlement (Jan 24)	New Seat Entitlement
Conservative	44	41
Labour	34	34
NPAIC	9	9

2.3 The table above represents the strict application of the calculations contained in Appendix 1. In addition to the groups, the calculations allow for one seat to be taken up by an unaligned Member. Group Leaders and unaligned Members will need to agree the seat allocations based on the revised political balance. If the Chamber wishes to decide on an alternative application of the calculations it can do so by usual voting means at the meeting.

2.4 Presenting a revised political balance report at Full Council is a statutory requirement albeit the timing of this change and report at this point of the municipal year makes the application of the changes limited.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 Political balance is calculated to show the objective division of committee seats across committees. Groups may wish to confirm alternative arrangements to seat allocation, which is known as 'manual adjustment'.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 For transparency the Council is encouraged to have sight of any changes to political balance and agree or note them.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Consultation has been undertaken in respect of this report with the leaders of each of the political groups represented on the Council. Their agreement has been obtained to the calculations relating to the allocation of seats on committees and their respective nominations can be put before Council for approval.

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6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 Appointing members to committees in accordance with the political balance of the Council and associated allocation of seats on committees will enable the Council to properly discharge its functions.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Rosie Hurst**
Interim Finance Manager (05/03/24)

There are no direct financial implications related to the change in political balance. The cost of servicing committees will be met through the existing budgets.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Jayne Middleton-Albooye**
Assistant Director – Legal & Governance (06/03/24)

Under sections 15 - 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the Council is under a duty to review the representation of different political groups on Committees and, as soon as practicable after such review, determine the allocation to different political groups and give effect to allocations. This is so as to ensure that the overall political composition of the Council is, as far as reasonably practicable, reflected in the appointment of Members to Committees and Sub-Committees.

This review has to be done at or as soon as practicable after the annual meeting of full Council. A review should also be done where the overall political balance of the Council changes during the course of the municipal year. Following any change in the overall political balance, the authority is required to undertake a review and consider any implications for representation on Council Committees and Sub-Committees.

Following the notification to the Proper Officer that two Members have changed their political group, a review must take place as soon as practicable where such notification is more than one month after the last review (reg. 17 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990).

If following a review, it is considered that any changes need to be made to Committee and/or Sub-Committee allocations then a report needs to go to full Council setting out the recommended changes. The recommendations set out in this report comply with this requirement.

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7.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Head of Community Development (05/03/24)

There are no direct implications for this report.

7.4 **Risks**

Proper and appropriate political representation is key to good governance and decision making.

7.5 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children

None.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None.

9. **Appendices to the report**

There are the following appendices to this report:

- Appendix 1 – Revised Political Balance Calculations

Report Author:

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Head of Democratic, Member and Scrutiny Services

Legal and Democratic Services

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