

26 October 2016		ITEM: 9
Council		
Revised Political Balance		
Wards and communities affected: None	Key Decision: Not Applicable	
Report of: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive		
Accountable Head of Service: David Lawson, Deputy Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer		
Accountable Director: Lyn Carpenter, Chief Executive		
This report is public		

Executive Summary

This report requests the Council to confirm the calculations relating to the allocation of seats on committees following Councillor Churchman becoming a member of the Conservative Group on 20 September 2016.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That the political balance and allocation of seats, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved.**
- 1.2 Council note the manual adjustment requirements outlined in 2.3 and agree those adjustments proposed by group leaders at the meeting.**
- 1.3 In the absence of group leaders proposing agreed manual adjustments at 1.2 above for Full Council to identify and agree any necessary adjustments to committee membership to allow appointments to be made by group leaders in accordance with the reviewed political balance. Council is advised that the calculations indicate that the Labour Group need to give up one seat on Planning Committee and one seat from a Overview & Scrutiny Committees or Standard & Audit Committee.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The political balance of the Council was confirmed at its annual meeting on 25 May 2016 following the local elections. This balance is now altered with the Council's sole independent member, Councillor Churchman, joining the Conservative Group changing party figures to:

Conservatives: 18
UKIP: 17
Labour: 14

Political proportionality

- 2.2 Appendix 1 of this report shows the impact of this change of party membership to the political balance, namely that the two seats Councillor Churchman held as an independent councillor (1 seat on General Services Committee and 1 seat on Licensing Committee) are now gained by the Conservative Group.
- 2.3 There is a subsequent impact on manual adjustments and as can be seen in row 21 of the chart in appendix 1 the following adjustments are required to be made:
- Labour to lose 2 seats across committees
 - Conservatives to gain 1 seat across committees
 - UKIP to gain 1 seat across committees
- 2.4 Group Leaders are expected to propose their preferred manual adjustments at the meeting to be agreed by Council.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Manual adjustments are discretionary and are based on agreement between all group leaders as to how these adjustments should be made. The adjustments reflected in 2.4 were agreed between the three group leaders.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 For transparency the Council are 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.

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: **Laura Last**
Senior Finance Officer – Management Accounts

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: **David Lawson**
Monitoring Officer and Deputy Head of Legal

These are set out in the body of the report.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Community Development and Equalities Manager

The Council is under a statutory duty to ensure that equality and diversity is a key part of the decision making process of the Council. Therefore, attention is drawn to the importance of ensuring that appointments to committees are underpinned by appropriate training on the statutory equality framework. The introduction of essential member training provides the assurance that members of committees will be able to fulfil their obligations with a full understanding of equality and diversity issues. This is fundamental to the Council being able to meet its statutory responsibilities. However, consideration must be given to members not completing the training or not attending, and the steps to be taken in these circumstances, once the member has been appointed.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

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

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