

31 January 2024		ITEM 10
Full Council		
Revised Political Balance		
Wards and communities affected: None	Key Decision: Not Applicable	
Report of: Dave Smith, Interim Chief Executive		
Accountable Assistant Director: Not applicable		
Accountable Director: Asmat Hussain, Interim Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer		
This report is public.		

Executive Summary

This report requests the Council confirm the calculations relating to the allocation of seats on committees following the creation of the Non-Political Alliance of Independent Councillors (NPAIC).

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 **That the political balance and allocation of seats, as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.**
- 1.2 **That Council note any subsequent changes to political balance on committees do not take effect by agreement of all group leaders.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Following the notification to the Proper Officer of a new political group in November 2023, to be known as the 'Non-Political Alliance of Independent Councillors', the new political make up of the council is:

Conservatives: 25

Labour: 19

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

- 2.2 Appendix 1 of this report shows the impact of this change on political balance. In summary NPAIC would expect to claim 9 seats across committees. This represents an increase of two seats from the 7 which the five independent councillors were entitled to previously.

2.3 NPAIC has confirmed they do not wish to claim these two extra seats and are satisfied that the current seat allocations remain as previously agreed by Full Council. NPAIC may wish to appoint to seats they currently have access to through former arrangements.

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.

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 (27/11/23)

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: **Gina Clarke**
Governance Lawyer (29/11/23)

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 a new political group has been constituted, 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.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Head of Community Development (27/11/23)

There are no direct implications for this report.

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

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Legal and Democratic Services