



Council

Monday 27 January 2025

Subject: Review Of The Allocation Of Seats To Political Groups On Committees/Sub -Committees

Report by:

Monitoring Officer

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Purpose / Summary:

This report sets out the details of the political groups on the Council, the number of Members to be appointed to serve on each committee and the allocation to different political groups of seats on the committees.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) **that the details of political groups, as set out in Appendix A, be noted;**
- 2) **that the number of Members to be appointed to serve on each Committee, arising from the Head of Paid Service's delegated decision, and following consultation will all Group Leaders be noted; and**
- 3) **that the allocation to different political groups of seats on committees, as set out in Appendix B, arising from the Head of Paid Service's delegated decision following consultation with all Group Leaders, be noted.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

Council is required to review the allocation to different political groups of seats on committees and sub-committees, in accordance with the provisions of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, when either a trigger is met (election, resignation change in Group Membership) or at least annually at its annual meeting as set out in the Constitution.

This review is borne out of due notice having been received from Councillor Trevor Bridgwood advising that he wished to leave the Opposition Group (Conservative) and form a new Group alongside the unaligned independent Member, Councillor Jeanette McGhee. Due notice on 22 November 2024 further advised that the Group wished to be known as the Consensus Independent Group.

Financial :

None directly arising as a result of this report.

Staffing :

None directly arising as a result of this report.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

None directly arising as a result of this report.

Data Protection Implications :

None directly arising as a result of this report.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

None directly arising as a result of this report.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :

None directly arising as a result of this report.

Health Implications:

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Working Papers and Options considered in January 2025 held by Democratic Services.

Notice to Head of Paid Service advising of wish to form a new Group and Leave the Opposition (Conservative) Group

Risk Assessment :

n/a

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

x

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

x

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the provisions of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council is required to review the allocation to different political groups of seats on committees and sub-committees.
- 1.2 The last review of the allocations took place in June 2024 following a Councillor's decision to un-align from the Liberal Democrat Administration and to not join another Group.
- 1.3 This review is borne out of due notice having been received from Councillor Trevor Bridgwood, advising that he wished to leave the Opposition (Conservative) Group and form a new Group alongside the unaligned independent Member, Councillor Jeanette McGhee.
- 1.4 Due notice received on 22 November 2024, under regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees & Political Groups) Regulations 1990, advised that the new Group wished to be known as the Consensus Independent Group and that Councillor Trevor Bridgwood would be the Group's appointed Leader, and Councillor McGhee its Deputy Group Leader.
- 1.5 Existing political groups for the purposes of the Local Government (Committees & Political Groups) Regulations 1990 are as follows:

Group	No. of Members	Leader	Deputy
The Liberal Democrat Administration Group	18	Councillor Trevor Young	Councillor Lesley Rollings
The Opposition Group	14	Councillor Ian Fleetwood	Councillor Roger Patterson
The Lincolnshire Independent	2	Councillor Paul Key	Councillor Chris Darcel
The Consensus Independent Group	2	Councillor Trevor Bridgwood	Councillor Jeanette McGhee

- 1.5 The Council currently has no unaligned Members.
- 1.6 The Council has delegated authority to the Head of Paid Service to agree, following consultation with the Group Leaders, the overall allocation of seats to groups resulting from the application of rounding.

1.7 Full details of group membership are set out in Appendix A.

2. The Allocations

2.1 In accordance with the provisions of section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Duty to allocate seats to political groups), the Council is required to give effect, so far as reasonably practicable, to the following specified principles:

- (a) that not all the seats on a Committee/Sub-Committee are allocated to the same political group;
- (b) that the majority of the seats on a Committee/Sub-Committee are allocated to a particular political group where 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 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 seats on the Committee/Sub-Committee which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that Committee/Sub-Committee as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

2.2 (b) above applies to a lesser degree as there is no one Group with a majority of seats on the Council. External advice has been undertaken to ensure the application of the rules has been applied equitably.

2.3 All of the Group Leaders were consulted on the number of Members to be appointed to serve on the Committees. Any "trading" required to achieve the mathematical requirement was determined mutually by Group Leaders.

2.4 In order to give effect, so far as is reasonably practicable, to the principles specified above and in consultation with Group Leaders as required by the delegation, it has been determined that the best fit to meet the political balance rules is for the: -

- Planning Committee, Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, Prosperous Communities Committee, and Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comprise 14 Members;
- Chief Officer Employment Committee and Governance and Audit Committee to comprise 8 Members.

- Licensing Committee, Regulatory Committee to comprise 11 Members *
- 2.5 Applying group numbers to the seats available on the Committees gives the allocation set out in Appendix B, which is supported by the Group Leaders as the most reasonably practical in the circumstances.
- 2.6 *As agreed as part of the Annual Review of the Constitution during 2017/2018, the same 11 Members comprise both the Licensing Committee and the Regulatory Committee. Licensing Committee, and due to the linked nature Regulatory Committee, are the only Committees which fall outside of the Political Balance Rules and were not amended as part of this review.