
POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY

Committee: Annual Council

Date: 29 April 2021

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[W2]

1.0 ISSUE

- 1.1 To receive details of the political balance of the Council and the implications for the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That Council notes the details of the political balance of the Council as set out in Appendix 1 and approves the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies as set out in Appendix 2, or agrees an alternative (on a Nem Con basis, if necessary).

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is a table showing the allocation of places on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies in accordance with the requirements of the proportionality rules. Under Section 15(5)(a) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (see below), all seats on a Committee/Sub-Committee cannot be allocated to the same Political Group.
- 3.2 Arising from the Committee re-structuring agreed at the Council meeting on 23 February 2021, Group Leaders have been advised of the number of places available on each Committee to be filled by their Groups, and of any necessary adjustments to be made between the political Groups in their overall seat allocations. Attached at Appendix 2 is the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies which reflects the notification given by the Conservative Group Leader, to accord with adjustments required under the proportionality rules. Under the proportionality rules, the Conservative Group has agreed to cede a place on Finance & Assets Hearings Sub Committee, and has offered to cede a place to the Liberal Democrat Group on Licensing (Non-Statutory) Sub-Committee.
- 3.3 At the Annual Council meeting held on 14 May 2013, the dissolution of the Council's Scrutiny Committee was approved. Similarly, the revised Committee structures approved by the Council on 15 April 2014, 11 April 2017, 11 April 2019 and 23 February 2021 did not include a Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.4 Agenda Item 14 deals with the appointments to be made to fill those places on Committees and other Member bodies.

4.0 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989

4.1 Section 15(5) of the Act sets down the principles for the allocation of seats on Committees between the political Groups on the Council. The principles are applied in sequence and provide a safeguard to enable any distortion caused by rounding up or down to be remedied. The principles require, in effect, that:

- (a) all seats are not allocated to the same political Group.
- (b) the majority of seats are allocated to the political Group having a majority of the authority's membership.
- (c) subject to (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on the TOTAL of all committees allocated to a political Group bears the same proportion as the proportion of the seats held on full Council (this principle allows any accumulated distortion caused by rounding up or down in (d) below to be remedied).
- (d) subject to (a) to (c) above, the number of seats on each Committee allocated to a political Group bears the same proportion to the proportion on full Council.

4.2 The effect of rounding up or down across the overall number of seats to be allocated on Committees can be quite significant which is why the principles explicitly provide for any distortion to be rectified.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None arising from this report.

6.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Proportionality calculations

Appendix 2 – Allocation of places on Committees, Sub-Committees

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Section 15) Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990	Room 214B The Grange Ely	Tracy Couper Democratic Services Manager (01353) 665555 E-mail: tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk