

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Council

Date: **14 December 2017**

Report of: **Head of Democratic Services**

Subject: **ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO COMMITTEES**

SUMMARY

This report provides details of the calculations for political balance relating to the allocation of seats on committees and panels, following the recent by-election for the Stubbington ward.

The report asks the Council to appoint the nominations of the political groups to committees and also to confirm the role of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for each committee.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council approves:

- (a) the allocation of seats, as set out in Appendix A for the remainder of the municipal year 2017-18; and
- (b) the nominations of the political groups to seats on committees, along with the nominations of deputies and the appointment of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for each committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2017-18, as set out in Appendix B (to be tabled following the receipt of nominations).

INTRODUCTION

1. Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 imposes a duty on the local authority to review the allocation of seats on the committees of the authority as soon as is practicable after any division of, or change to political groups occurs.
2. On 9 November 2017 the by-election for the Stubbington ward resulted in the seat being won by the Liberal Democrat candidate.
3. Accordingly, the Council is now invited to review the allocation of seats to its committees along with the nomination of deputies and the appointment of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for each committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2017-18. Such appointments will take effect from 15 December 2017.

ALLOCATION OF SEATS

4. Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 provides the following principles which apply to the allocation of seats:
 - (a) that not all the seats on the body to which appointments are being made are allocated to the same political group;
 - (b) that the majority of seats on each Committee are allocated to a particular group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
 - (c) that, subject to (a) and (b), when allocating seats to a political group, the total number of their seats across all the ordinary committees of the Council, must reflect their proportion of the authority's membership; and
 - (d) subject to (a) to (c), that the number of seats on each committee is as far as possible in proportion to the group's membership of the authority.
5. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires that, once the Council has determined the allocation of Committee places between the political groups, the Council must then appoint the nominees of the political groups to the Committees.

POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY

6. Following the change of group membership in September 2014, the political balance of the Council is set out in the following table:

Group	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	(Independent)	Total
Councillors	24	5	(2)	31
%	77.42	16.13	(6.45)	100

7. Whilst there is a UKIP councillor, a group cannot be formed by a single member and so for the purposes of the calculations of political proportionality for

committee allocations, the UKIP councillor will be treated as an independent member.

8. The allocation of seats between the political groups for each committee shall be in accordance with the figures at Appendix A to this report.

ADJUSTMENTS FOLLOWING CALCULATIONS

9. Each of the political groups is entitled to a certain number of seats on committees. This is based upon their percentage representation on the Council as a whole, as detailed in the table at paragraph 6 above.
10. There are a total of 79 seats to be allocated and the strict entitlement to seats on committees for each political group is as follows:
 - Conservative - 61 seats
 - Liberal Democrat - 13 seats
11. Each of the political groups are only entitled to their proportion of seats and once this entitlement has been reached, a manual adjustment may be necessary.
12. Appendix A shows a rounded allocation of seats to each political group. This is then required to be manually adjusted to ensure that the number of seats allocated to a particular political group matches and does not exceed their strict entitlement.
13. Therefore, the following manual adjustments are required:
 - (a) Under the calculation, the Conservative Group has notionally been allocated 59 seats on committees. This is 2 less more than the strict entitlement of 61 seats and so a positive adjustment must be made to balance the allocations.
 - (b) The Liberal Democrat Group has notionally been allocated 11 seats on committees. This is 2 less than the strict entitlement of 13 seats and so a positive adjustment must be made to balance the allocations.
 - (c) There is one councillor representing the UKIP party but for the purposes of these calculations, a single member cannot be treated as a group and will therefore be calculated as an independent councillor.
 - (d) There are two independent councillors who do not represent a political group. There is no strict entitlement calculation applicable to independent members however, following the calculations and allocation of seats to political groups, the Council must appoint the non-group members to any seats not otherwise allocated. In doing this, the Council may allocate seats from those committees requiring a balancing adjustment. These affected committees are shaded in the table at Appendix A.
 - (e) The seat allocations for each committee must equal the agreed number of seats for that committee, as determined by Council. Where this does not occur, the manual adjustments described at paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above, must be made from those committees requiring a balancing adjustment.

These affected committees are shaded in the table at Appendix A.

Any remaining seats are “gifted” to the independent members and the allocation of these seats must be agreed by a vote of Council.

14. Group Leaders have been requested to provide nominations to the places on committees to which their respective groups are entitled. The nominations of political groups to seats on committees are set out in Appendix B, to be tabled at the meeting.
15. The Council is also required to appoint a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for each committee and these nominations are included at Appendix B, along with the nomination of deputies.
16. The minority group Leader has been requested to nominate a spokesman for each Executive portfolio area. The nominations of spokesmen to seats on committees are set out in Appendix B.

Background Papers:

None

Reference Papers:

Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990

Local Government and Housing Act 1989

Declaration of the result of Poll 9 November 2017 By-Election

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Leigh Usher. (Ext 4553)