

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Council

Date: **9 October 2014**

Report of: **Chief Executive Officer**

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 recent changes to political groups. The report asks the Council to appoint the nominations of the political groups to committees and also to appoint 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 2014-15; 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 2014-15, 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 23 September 2014, the Chief Executive Officer received notification from Councillor G Fazackarley that he wished to be treated as a member of the Fareham Borough Council Conservative Group, with immediate effect. This request was confirmed by the Leader of the Conservative Group.
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 2014-15. Such appointments will take effect from 10 October 2014.

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	(UKIP)	(Independent)	Total
Councillors	24	4	(1)	(2)	31
%	77.42	12.9	(3.23)	(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 8 above.
10. There are a total of 82 seats to be allocated and the strict entitlement to seats on committees for each political group is as follows:
 - Conservative - 63 seats
 - Liberal Democrat - 11 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 61 seats on committees. This is 2 less than their strict entitlement of 63 seats and so a positive adjustment must be made to balance the allocations.
 - (b) The Liberal Democrat Group has notionally been allocated 12 seats on committees. The Group cannot have a greater representation on committees than their strict entitlement of 11 seats and so a negative adjustment must be made to balance the allocations.
 - (c) The seat allocations for each committee must equal the agreed number of seats for that committee, as determined by the Council at its Annual Meeting on 29 May 2014. Where this does not occur, the manual adjustments described at (b) above, must be made from those committees requiring a balancing adjustment. These affected committees are shaded in the table at Appendix A.
 - (d) There are three independent councillors who are not members of a Fareham Borough Council political group. There is no strict entitlement calculation applicable to an independent member 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.

These remaining seats are “gifted” to the independent members and the

allocation of these seats must be agreed by a vote of the 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:

Notice of change of political group to the Chief Executive Officer

Reference Papers:

Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990

Local Government and Housing Act 1989

Enquiries:

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