



<b>Report to:</b>	Council	22 September 2022
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services	

# **Review of proportionality and allocation of seats on committees and other appointments 2022-23**

## **Executive Summary**

1. To seek Council's approval of a review of political proportionality on the Council following a change of political group membership arising from the resignation as a member of the Liberal Democrat Group of Councillor Dan Lentell.
2. **Key Decision**  
No

## **Recommendations**

3. It is recommended that Council approves:
  - i. The allocation of seats on committees as set out at Table 2 in Appendix A;
  - ii. The nominations of the Political Group leaders to seats on the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and Licensing Committee as set out in Appendix B.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

4. To comply with Standing Order 1.3 "Selection of Councillors on Committees and Outside Bodies"; to enable the Council to comply with its obligations under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

## **Details**

5. Political Groups on the Council are formed in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 when two or more Councillors notify the Chief Executive, as the proper officer, of their wish to be treated as a Political Group. A review of allocation of seats to political groups must take place under section 17 of these regulations as soon as practicable after

a change in the composition of Political Groups on the Council. Following the notification of Councillor Dan Lentell to the proper officer of his resignation from the Liberal Democrat group, a review of political proportionality is required.

6. The following principles laid down in the Act apply to the allocation of seats:
  - a. That not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same Political Group.
  - b. That the majority of seats on the body are allocated to a particular Political Group if 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 of a relevant authority 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 body which are allocated to each Political Group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on the body as is borne by the number of members of that Group on the membership of the authority.
7. These principles must be applied as far as reasonably practical. Where adjustments are required to reflect rounding up and down of fractions, the final decision rests with Council, ideally on the recommendation of the Political Group leaders.
8. 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.
9. Following the resignation of Councillor Dan Lentell from the Liberal Democrat Group, the political makeup of the Council's 45 seats is as follows:

Liberal Democrat	36
Conservative	8
Unaligned	1

10. The political balance of the Council can be calculated by using the formula below:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Councillors in a specified Political Group}}{\text{Number of Councillors in all Political Groups (44)}} \times 100$$

11. The percentage breakdown of each Political Group is therefore as follows:

Liberal Democrat – 81.818%  
Conservative – 18.182%

12. Each of the Political Groups (formed when two or more Councillors notify the Chief Executive, as Proper Officer, of their wish to be treated as a Group) is

entitled to a certain number of seats on committees. This is based on their Group's percentage representation, as detailed above.

13. The Council's current committee structure comprises 62 seats.

14. The calculation to determine the entitlement of Political Groups to seats on committees is as follows:

$$\frac{\% \text{ for each Political Group (para. 11 above) } \times \text{ number of committee seats (62)}}{100}$$

15. The notional entitlement to committee seats for each Political Group is therefore as follows:

Liberal Democrat	50.727	= 51	seats
Conservative	11.273	= 11	seats
			<b>62 seats</b>

16. Fractional entitlements of less than one half are rounded down and entitlements of one half or more are rounded up. So that this process of rounding does not result in disproportionate advantage to any one political group, the aggregate membership of all the ordinary committees must be in line with the proportions on the Council.

17. Political Groups may give any seat allocated to them to any other Group or, if there are any non-Grouped Members, to any non-Grouped Member.

### **Joint Committees/Advisory Committees**

18. Unlike the ordinary committees, the seats on joint committees and advisory committees are not aggregated. Proportionality is applied as far as reasonably practical on each individual joint or advisory committee. The Majority Group must have a majority on each such committee.

### **Allocation of seats to committees**

19. The proposed allocation of seats to committees is set out at Table 2 of Appendix A.

### **Nominations and Substitutes**

20. Substitute members may be appointed from each Political Group and must be appointed by Council at in a hierarchical list per committee.

21. The nominations of Political Groups to seats on the two committees on which their allocations have changed as a result of this review (Scrutiny and Overview Committee and Licensing Committee), are set out at Appendix B.

### **Mandatory Training Requirements**

22. Members are reminded that members and substitute members of the Planning Committee and Licensing Committee may only serve on these bodies once they have received the necessary training. Members sitting on an employee appeals panel will also be required to undertake appropriate training before being eligible for appointment to the panel.

### **Options**

23. Council can opt to approve the proposals set out in the report in respect of allocation of seats on committees or agree another proposal that reflects the principles of political proportionality.
24. The requirement to allocate seats according to Political Groups' proportionate strengths can be overridden by some other arrangement, either in relation to all committees, sub-committees and other bodies or in relation to any individual committee, sub-committee or other body, provided that no Councillor votes against the alternative arrangement when it is proposed (a "no dissent" alternative).
25. The Council is therefore not obliged to follow the proportionality rules and may make different arrangements, provided the following procedures set out in Section 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 are followed:
- i. Due notice is given in the agenda for the meeting.
  - ii. No Member of the Council votes against the proposal, although there may be abstentions.

### **Implications**

26. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, there are no significant implications.

### **Background Papers**

The following background information was used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire District Council's Constitution
- The Local Government and Housing Act 1989
- The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990

### **Appendices**

Appendix A: Revised Committee seat allocation

Appendix B: Nominations for revised seat allocations on Licensing and Scrutiny and Overview Committee

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# Appendix A

## Committee seat allocation at September 2022-23

### Political Proportionality

Liberal Democrat – 81.818

Conservative – 18.182

### Political Group committee seat entitlement on ordinary committees

Liberal Democrat – 51 seats

Conservative – 11 seats

### Table 1: indicative committee seat allocation

In Table 1 below, the application of proportionality to each committee results in a calculation which is indicative, shown in brackets. The figures in brackets are indicative because rounding up in all cases where the fraction is over 0.5 would result in a total number of committee seats which differs from the total to which each Political Group is entitled.

The two committees on which these figures indicate that the seat allocation could change as a result of this review are Scrutiny and Overview Committee and Licensing Committee.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Number of seats</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	<b>Conservative</b>
Audit and Corporate Governance Committee	7	<b>6</b> (5.727)	<b>1</b> (1.273)
Civic Affairs Committee	9	<b>7</b> (7.364)	<b>2</b> (1.636)
Employment and Staffing Committee	7	<b>6</b> (5.727)	<b>1</b> (1.273)
Licensing Committee	14	<b>12 or 11</b> (11.455)	<b>2 or 3</b> (2.545)
Planning Committee	11	<b>9</b> (9.000)	<b>2</b> (2.000)
Scrutiny and Overview Committee	14	<b>12 or 11</b> (11.455)	<b>2 or 3</b> (2.545)
Total required to reflect overall proportionality:	62	<b>51</b>	<b>11</b>

### Table 2: proposed committee seat allocation

In order to result in allocation of committee seats which reflects overall proportionality, the recommendation of the Political Groups is that one additional seat on the Scrutiny and Overview Committee should be allocated to the Conservative Group.

The proposed seat allocation for all committees is therefore as set out in Table 2.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Number of seats</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	<b>Conservative</b>
Audit and Corporate Governance Committee	7	6	1
Civic Affairs Committee	9	7	2
Employment and Staffing Committee	7	6	1
Licensing Committee	14	12	2
Planning Committee	11	9	2
Scrutiny and Overview Committee	14	11	3
Total	62	51	11

## Appendix B

### Nominations for seats on committees

The nominations to the two committees where there is a change in seat allocation to each Political Group are set out below.

#### Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Notes	Liberal Democrat	Conservative
<b>14 members</b>	1.Stephen Drew (C) 2.Richard Stobart 3.John Loveluck 4.Sally Ann Hart 5.Aiden Van de Weyer 6.Anna Bradnam 7.Helene Leeming 8.Libby Earle 9.James Hobro 10.Peter Fane 11.Sunita Hansraj	1.Graham Cone (VC) 2.Sue Ellington 3.Heather Williams
	<b><i>Substitutes</i></b> 1.Annika Osborne 2.Peter Sandford 3.Carla Hofman 4.Lisa Redrup 5.Will Jackson-Wood	<b><i>Substitutes</i></b> 1.Richard Williams 2.Bunty Waters 3.Mark Howell 4.Lina Nieto 5.Shrobona Bhattacharya

#### Licensing Committee

Notes	Liberal Democrat	Conservative
<b>14 members</b>  The Lead Cabinet Member with responsibility for licensing <b>may</b> serve on this committee.	1.Anna Bradnam (C) 2.Annika Osborne (VC) 3.Geoff Harvey 4.Sally Ann Hart 5.Peter Sandford 6.Peter McDonald 7.John Loveluck 8.Jose Hales 9.Brian Milnes 10.Lisa Redrup 11.Sunita Hansraj 12.Corinne Garvie	1.Shrobona Bhattacharya 2.Mark Howell

	<b><i>Substitutes</i></b> 1.Peter Fane 2.Carla Hofman 3.Pippa Heylings 4.Michael Atkins 5.Stephen Drew	<b><i>Substitutes</i></b> 1.Heather Williams 2.Graham Cone 3.Sue Ellington 4.Bunty Waters 5. Lina Nieto
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