

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

19 MAY 2010

REPORT OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

Report Prepared by Neil Harris

1. ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

1.1 Notification has been received of a change in the size of the Political Groups on the Council. This therefore necessitates a review of the allocation of seats on Committees.

1.1.1 The Constitution of the 3 Political Groups is now as follows:

Conservatives	28
Liberal Democrat	23
Independent	4
	<u>55</u>

1.1.2 The allocation on individual Committees is set out in Appendix A, whilst Appendix B demonstrates the political balance on the various Committee sizes.

1.1.3 Following discussions with the Group Leaders the allocation of seats on the Licensing and Licensing 2003 Committee is being recommended to be reduced to 10 Members as a membership of 11 cannot be balanced as demonstrated in Appendix B. Additionally it is also being recommended that the membership of the Planning Referrals Committee is reduced to 3 and that a Member from each Political Group is appointed meaning that the Committee is not politically balanced. Section 17, as described below, will then apply to this appointment.

1.1.4 The allocation of seats to the Standard Committee has not been included in Appendix A because the Standards Board for England Statutory Guidance on the Role and Makeup of Standards Committee states that Borough Councillor representation on the Committee does not need to reflect the political balance of the Authority. This is because the Standards Committee should be above party politics and its members need to have the respect of the whole Authority. However, the Committee does have 6 Borough Council representations and the political balance for 6 is 3 Conservatives and 3 Liberal Democrats.

1.1.3 Section 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 provides for exceptions to the Political balance requirements. In essence the Council can amend the political balance of a Committee provided that notice of the intention to give such consideration has been given to all Members of the Committee and when the alternative arrangements are put to the vote at the Council, no members of the Council votes against them.

1.2 **RECOMMENDED**

1.2.1 **That the calculation for entitlement on individual Committees and the requisite adjustments as set out in Appendix A be determined taking into account the changes for the Licensing and Licensing 2003 Committees and the Planning Referrals Committee.**

1.2.2 **That the Council determines the number of seats to be allocated to each Political Group on the Standards Committee.**