

REVIEW OF ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

Final Decision-Maker	Council
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Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

A review of the allocation of seats on committees has been undertaken due to an additional vacancy and a change of Group Membership.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendation to Council:

1. That the allocation of seats on Committees be as negotiated by Group Leaders, the basis for the negotiation is set out in Appendix 1 to this report; and
2. That the wishes of the Group Leaders with regard to Membership of Committees be accepted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Council Meeting	30 September 2020

REVIEW OF ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	There are no direct impacts on corporate priorities arising from this, but the Committees when in place discharge the functions delegated to them having regard where appropriate to the Council's strategic objectives.	Democratic Services Officer
Risk Management	See section 5 below.	Democratic Services Officer
Financial	The Committees appointed having regard to the political balance requirements form part of the plan for the committee system of governance and as such there are no additional financial implications.	Section 151 Officer
Staffing	There are no staffing implications.	Democratic Services Officer
Legal	The Council must allocate seats on Committees to the different political groups to reflect the size of each political group – section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Consideration should be given to the matters outlined in the legislation. It is possible to have Committees that are not politically balanced but in order for that to be allowed no Member of the Council can vote against a motion proposing it.	Head of Mid-Kent Legal Services
Privacy and Data Protection	No specific issues arise.	Data Protection Officer
Equalities	The review will ensure an equitable political	Equalities and

	representation in membership of Committees.	Corporate Policy Officer
Crime and Disorder	No specific issues arise.	Democratic Services Officer
Procurement	No specific issues arise.	Democratic Services Officer
Cross Cutting Objectives	No specific issues arise.	Democratic Services Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council has a statutory requirement under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to ensure political proportionality in the membership of Committees. As a result of the vacancy and change, the composition of the Council is as follows:

Conservative	22
Liberal Democrat	21
Independent	4
Labour	4
Independent Maidstone	2
Total	53

2.2 Appendix 1 sets out the changes to committee places on a proportionality basis. These results in adjustments required to maintain overall political balance. The Group Leaders are currently negotiating the seat changes required to achieve that balance.

2.3 Following the changes to committee places some adjustment to Committee Memberships will be required and the wishes of the Group Leaders must be accepted in this regard and will be made available once put forward.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 The allocation of seats on individual Committees which achieves overall political balance is set out in Appendix 1 with negotiations to continue.

3.2 The Council will need to agree a final seat allocation at the meeting.

3.3 The Council has a duty to accept the wishes of Groups with regard to members and substitute members on Committees.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

4.1 That the Council accept the outcome of the negotiations between Group Leaders once agreed.

5. RISK

- 5.1 The review of the allocation of seats on Committees will ensure an appropriate political balance in membership of Committees.
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6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 Group Leaders have been made aware of this report coming to Council and no additional changes to Committee Memberships have been requested beyond those outlined.
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 Once the allocation of seats has been decided upon, there is a duty to give effect to the allocation by making appointments to them in accordance with the wishes of the Group Leaders on behalf of their respective Political Groups.
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Review of Allocation of Seats on Committees

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None