

COUNCIL

12 March 2018

REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE

Report of the Director for Resources

Strategic Aim:	All	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr O Hemsley, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Rutland One Public Estate & Growth, Tourism & Economic Development, Resources (other than Finance and Communications)	
Contact Officer(s):	Debbie Mogg, Director for Resources	01572 758358 dmogg@rutland.gov.uk
	Natasha Taylor, Governance Team Manager	01572 720991 ntaylor@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	Not Applicable	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

1. That Council approves the revised political balance calculation as per paragraph 2.5 of this report.
2. That Council approves the allocation of seats to Political Groups shown at paragraph 2.6 and notes the membership of each committee as set out in Appendix 1.
3. That Council appoints non-aligned members to each of the vacant seats on the Audit and Risk Committee and the Employment & Appeals Committee.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To review the political balance of Committees and Panels in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Regulations made thereunder, following the notification to the Chief Executive of a change of political groups within Rutland County Council.
- 1.2 To request the Council to approve the allocation of seats in accordance with the statutory requirements concerning political balance.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 The Chief Executive was notified on 8th January 2018 that Councillor Tony Mathias, had resigned from the Council.
- 2.2 A by-election was subsequently held on 8th March 2018 which resulted in the election of Councillor Adam Lowe for the Oakham South East Ward. It is therefore necessary to review the representation of Groups to ensure there is political balance across the relevant Committees and Panels of the Council.
- 2.3 The Councils' duty is to determine the allocation of seats to be filled by appointments by the authority, except the Cabinet. The purpose is to ensure that there is proportionality across all formal activities of the Council, representing the overall political composition. It affects all formally constituted panels, committees and sub-committees which discharge functions on behalf of the authority, and some external bodies if they are in the nature of joint committees and the Council appoints at least three members. Political balance is not compulsory for working parties, forums or joint partnerships.
- 2.4 Councillor Lowe has confirmed that he will not be part of a group and will therefore be a non-aligned member.
- 2.5 The composition of the Council is shown in the following table. Using 51 as the total number of voting places across all Committees and Panels, the final column shows the total number of places each group is entitled to, using the calculated proportions.

Group	No. of cllrs		Number of seats	Rounded number of seats
Conservatives	17	65.39	33.35	33
Independent Group	5	19.23	9.81	10
Non-aligned	4	15.38	7.85	8
	26	100%	51	51

- 2.6 The allocations set out in the table below show the allocation of seats to political groups, as agreed between the political groups.

Committee or Panel	Conservative	Independent	Non-aligned
Audit and Risk (7)	4	1	2
Conduct (6)	4	1	1
Planning and Licensing (10)	7	2	1
Employment and Appeals (7)	4	1	2

Committee or Panel	Conservative	Independent	Non-aligned
Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel (7)	5	1	1
Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel (7)	4	2	1
Growth, Infrastructure and Resources Scrutiny Panel (7)	5	2	0
TOTAL	33	10	8

2.7 The Conservative Group has reduced their membership on the Audit and Risk Committee and the Employment and Appeals Committee by 1 each. This creates a vacancy on each committee for a non-aligned member, to be filled by nomination and approval by Council at the meeting.

2.8 **Appendix A** shows the membership of each panel and committee, as informed by Group Leaders.

3 CONSULTATION

3.1 The information presented in the report has been compiled in consultation with the Group Leaders.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 In line with the relevant legislation, the Council must review the Political Balance and allocation of seats at its Annual Council. Therefore there is no alternative option.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The allocation of seats shall conform to the following principles (Local Government and Housing Act 1989 Part 1 Section 15(5)(a) – (d)) in the order shown:

- Not all the seats on a body are allocated to the same political group;
- A majority of the seats on a body are allocated to a group if it comprises a majority of the total membership of the authority;
- The number of seats on ordinary committees allocated to each group bears the same proportion to the total of all seats on ordinary committees as is borne by the number of members of that group to the total membership of the authority; and
- The number of seats on a body allocated to each group bears the same proportion to the number of seats on that body as is borne by the number of

members of that group to the total membership of the authority.

- 6.2 Constitutionally, the Council is required to review the representation of Groups at its Annual Meeting each year and as soon as practicable after an event, which alters the political balance between the Groups and to determine the allocation of seats to be filled by appointments by the Council. This is in accordance with Sections 15 to 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Section 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (Requirement to Constitute Political Groups).

7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been completed because there are no service, policy or organisational changes being proposed.

8 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

9 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no health and well-being implications arising from this report.

10 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None

11 APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A: Council Structure.

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.