

COUNCIL

9 January 2017

REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE

Report of the Director for Resources

Strategic Aim:	All	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr T C King, Leader of the Council	
Contact Officer(s):	Debbie Mogg, Director for Resources	01572 758358 dmogg@rutland.gov.uk
	Natasha Brown, Corporate Support Coordinator	01572 720991 nbrown@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	Not relevant	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council agrees to the number of seats being increased by one to 82, to take account of a proposed increase in the membership of the Audit and Risk Committee
2. That Council approves the revised political balance calculation and allocation of seats to Political Groups contained within this report
3. That Council approves the Committee and Panel membership set out in Appendix A.

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.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 The Chief Executive was notified on 29th November 2016 of a change to political groups. With effect from that date Councillor Alan Walters advised that he had resigned from the Independent Group and joined the Conservative Group. 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.
- 2.2 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.

2.3 At a meeting of Group Leaders, it was proposed that Council increase the number of seats on its Audit and Risk Committee from six to seven giving a total number of seats on the Council of 82.

2.4 The composition of the Council is shown in the following table. Using 82 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

Conservatives	18	69.23%	57
Independent Group	4	15.38%	13
Liberal Democrats	2	7.69%	6
Non-aligned	2	7.69%	6
	26	100%	82

2.5 The allocations set out in the table below apply the percentage calculations to each Committee with the exception that the Conservative Group have one seat more than calculated on the Employment and Appeals Committee, and one seat fewer than calculated on the Places Scrutiny Panel. This is to avoid the non-aligned members losing a seat on the Places Scrutiny Panel.

Committee or Panel	Conservative	Independent	Liberal Democrat	Non-aligned
Audit and Risk (7)	5	1	1	0
Conduct (6)	4	1	0	1
Development Control and Licensing (12)	8	2	1	1
Employment and Appeals (7)	6 (+1)	0	1	0
Licensing Act (10)	7	2	0	1
People (Adults and Health) Scrutiny Panel (10)	7	1	1	1
People (Children) Scrutiny Panel (10)	7	2	0	1
Places Scrutiny Panel (10)	6 (-1)	2	1	1

Committee or Panel	Conservative	Independent	Liberal Democrat	Non-aligned
Resources Scrutiny Panel (10)	7	2	1	0
TOTAL	57	13	6	6

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Consultation was undertaken with Group Leaders and this is reflected in the allocation of seats in section 2 above. There have been no changes to the seats allocated to the Liberal Democrat Group or the non-aligned Members.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 In line with the relevant legislation, the Council must review the Political Balance as soon as it is practicable to do after a change is notified.

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 Any seats to be filled by the appointment of voting co-optees (as on the People (Children) Scrutiny Panel) are taken into account only for the purpose of determining the majority of seats on the body and not for any other political balance purpose.

- 6.3 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: Revised Political Structure and Membership of Committees & Panels

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