

SPECIAL COUNCIL

26 January 2017

REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE

Report of the Director for Resources

Strategic Aim:	All	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr T Mathias, Acting Leader of the Council	
Contact Officer(s):	Debbie Mogg, Director for Resources	01572 758358 dmogg@rutland.gov.uk
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Ward Councillors	Not relevant	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council approves the revised political balance calculation as per paragraph 2.3 of this report.
2. That Council approves the allocation of seats to Political Groups contained within Appendix 1 of this report (to follow).
3. That Council approves any changes to the Committee and Panel membership as necessary dependent on Recommendation 2 above.

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 13th January 2017 that Councillor Terry King, Leader of Rutland County Council, had resigned from the Council due to ill health. 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 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.

Group	No. of cllrs		Number of seats	Rounded number of seats
Conservatives	16	68.00%	55.76	56
Independent Group	4	16.00%	13.12	13
Liberal Democrats	2	8.00%	6.56	7*
Non-aligned	2	8.00%	6.56	6
	25	100%	82	82

*the number of seats is rounded up for the Liberal Democrat Group to ensure they have the total number of seats they are entitled to. The remaining seats are allocated to the non-aligned members.

- 2.4 The allocations set out in the table below show the allocation of seats to political groups calculated by applying the percentage calculations to each Committee/Panel. The calculations alone do not provide for all of the principles set out below in section 5 to be met. Therefore, discussion and negotiation need to take place between the political groups to determine how the allocations are finalised. Once the groups have agreed their allocations, the remaining seats are allocated to the non-aligned Members. An update will be circulated before the meeting.

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

Committee or Panel	Conservative	Independent	Liberal Democrat
People (Children) Scrutiny Panel (10)	7	2	1
Places Scrutiny Panel (10)	7	2	1
Resources Scrutiny Panel (10)	7	2	1
TOTAL	57	15	8

3 CONSULTATION

3.1 Due to the short timescale consultation with Group Leaders is ongoing.

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: Allocation of seats to Political Groups (to follow)

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