

**POLITICAL BALANCE**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	N/A
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	Non key

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed political balance of the Council's Committees following the by-election for the Church Hill ward on 17<sup>th</sup> July.
- 1.2 The by-election was won by Nina Wood-Ford, who is a member of the Labour Group on the Council.
- 1.3 Once the Council has agreed the political balance, the Leaders of each of the Political Groups on the Council nominate to the places on each Committee. Councillors who are not members of a political group are appointed to Committees by the Council.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Council is requested to RESOLVE that**

- 1) the Political balance of the Committees of the Council be agreed as set out in paragraph 3.5;**
- 2) that if the political balance is agreed, the appointment by the Labour Group Leader to the extra place on the Planning Committee be noted.**

**3. KEY ISSUES**

**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. The level of members allowances, based on the current number of positions as set out in this report, has been agreed previously by the Council.

**Legal Implications**

- 3.2 With the exception of the Executive Committee, the Council is required by law to allocate places on its main Committees in accordance with its political make-up. The main requirements are that:

- the number of seats on each Committee allocated to each political group reflects the proportion it holds of the total number of seats on the Council;
- the Group with the majority of seats on the Council should hold the majority of seats on each Committee.

3.3 The definition of a Political Group for these purposes is that it has a minimum of 2 members. After the recent By - Election the composition of the Council is 18 Labour (previously 17) 9 Conservative, and 2 Councillors not in a political group.

3.4 The Council agreed the political balance at Annual Council, but is required to review this if the political make-up of the Council changes.

3.5 The table below shows the proposed allocation between committees based on the revised political balance. The only change proposed is to the Planning Committee, where Labour take an additional place and the place previously allocated to the non-aligned member is removed:

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Total places</b>	<b>Labour Group Places – entitled to 18 (+1)</b>	<b>Conservative Group Places – entitled to 9</b>	<b>Non-aligned Councillors Not entitled on political balance basis but Council allocates position</b>
Audit, Governance & Standards	9	5 (5.59)	3 (2.79)	1
Licensing	11	7 (6.83)	3 (3.41)	1
Planning	9	6 (5.59) (+1)	3 (2.79)	0 (-1)
	29	18	9	2
<b>Committees below are <u>not</u> proposed to be politically balanced – Council convention is that majority group does not take majority of seats</b>				
Overview and Scrutiny	9	4 (5.27)	4 (2.79) Or 5	1 Or 0
Crime and Disorder Panel	5	2 (2.93)	3 (1.55)	0

**Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.6 Once the Council agrees the allocation of seats to Committees, the leaders of each political group nominate members to fill them so that the business of the Council can continue to run smoothly. On this occasion only one change is proposed, to increase the representation of the Labour group by one place on the Planning Committee and remove the non-aligned Councillor.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.7 There are no specific implications arising from this report.

**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

There are no specific high level risks arising from this report.

**5. APPENDICES**

None

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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