

COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 8 th December 2020
Report Subject	Revised Political Balance
Report Author	Chief Officer (Governance)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council is required under the Political Balance Rules contained in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (as amended) to review the Council's political balance calculations when it becomes necessary. On this occasion, it is because the three remaining members of the Flintshire Independent Group have now joined the Independent Alliance group. There is one non-aligned member of the Council.

The Council's political groups and the number of Members on each is as follows:

Labour	34
Independent Alliance	16
Conservative	6
Liberal Democrats	6
New Independents	4
Independents	3
Non-aligned member	1

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That seats on committees be allocated in accordance with political balance as shown in appendix A.
2	That any changes to nominees for committee places be notified to the Head of Democratic Services as soon as possible.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE POLITICAL BALANCE
1.01	<p>The Council is required, as soon as practicable, after a change in the composition of political groups to recalculate political balance in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. As a political group – the Flintshire Independents- ceased to be on 15th October, with its three members joining the Independent Alliance , it is necessary to review the political balance calculation.</p>
1.02	<p>The basis of the statutory requirement is that Committee seats should be allocated to political groups (so far as is practicable) in the same proportion as those groups have to the total membership of the County Council.</p> <p>The allocation of seats on Committees to the political groups must recognise that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) There must be no Committees whereby only one group has all the seats;(ii) Where there is a majority group it is entitled to a majority upon every Committee. (This does not apply where the largest group does not have an overall majority);(iii) The total number of seats allocated to each political group should be (in so far as is practicable) in the same proportion as those groups' strengths upon the full Council;(iv) Each Committee should (so far as is practicable) have the same proportional division between political groups as is represented upon the full Council. <p>Thus if a group holds 25% of the total number of Councillors it should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1) 25% of the overall number of seats on the Council; and2) 25% seats on each Committee. <p>These rules are applied in hierarchical order so it is more important to allocate the correct number of seats overall than it is to allocate the correct number of seats on a particular committee.</p> <p>NB: Under the legislation these rules do not apply to either the Cabinet or the Standards Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">v) Where a or some councillors are not in a political group, then the Council must ensure that a proportion of seats are allocated to that or those councillors.
1.03	<p>The political balance calculation is attached as Appendix A. This is one possible lawful allocation of seats and other possible lawful allocations may exist.</p>
1.04	<p>At the Annual Meeting on 9th September, Council determined which political groups would nominate Overview and Scrutiny Committee chairs for the municipal year. For the avoidance of doubt, a review of the allocation of such chairs would only be reviewed if a group were to be</p>

	given seats on the Cabinet (where it did not have any before). A review is not triggered by a change in size of political groups nor by the formation of a new political group.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a result of this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Group leaders were consulted on the political balance calculation by email.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	Not applicable.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Political Balance calculation November 2020.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>Email from the Independent Alliance group leader, Cllr Peers to the Chief Officer (Governance) and Head of Democratic Services dated 16th October 2020.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Robert Robins, Head of Democratic Services Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: Robert.robins@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	None.