

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

14 May 2024

Report of the Interim Chief Executive and Interim Monitoring Officer

Part 1- Public

Matters For Decision

1 POLITICAL BALANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMITTEES

To determine the political balance arrangements for the Council's committees, boards and panels.

1.1.1 Under section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (duty to allocate seats to political groups) and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the Council is required to review the composition of any of its committees and sub-committees to which those provisions apply at the annual meeting of the Council and after any election.

1.1.2 The number of seats held by each of the political parties is as follows:

Group	Total	%
Conservative	20	45.45
Liberal Democrat	11	25.00
Green	8	18.18
Labour	3	6.82
Independent Alliance (Kent)	2	4.55
Total	44	100

1.1.3 The Council is required to determine the composition of its committees to reflect this political balance and to ensure that:

- (a) not all the seats on the committee to which appointments are made are allocated to the same political group;
- (b) the majority of seats on the committee is allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
- (c) subject to (a) and (b), the total number of seats allocated to a particular political group reflects that group's proportion of the membership of the authority;

- (d) subject to (a) and (c) the number of seats on each committee allocated to a particular group reflects that proportion of the membership of the authority.

1.1.4 The duty of the Council is to give effect to the above principles **so far as reasonably practicable**. This recognises that there cannot be an exact application of the rules.

1.1.5 The political group composition of the Council is as follows:

Conservative Group	Liberal Democrat	Green	Independent Alliance Kent	Labour	Total Seats
50	27	20	5	8	110
45.45	25.00	18.18	4.55	6.82	100%

1.1.6 The table below shows the number of committees etc of various sizes which need to be politically balanced and the way in which the total number of available seats might be allocated to reflect the proportions on the Council as a whole. There are no changes proposed to the existing Committee sizes and it is suggested that those committees requiring to be politically balanced be composed as follows:

Committee	Size	Con	Green	Ind All	Lab	Lib. Dem.
Overview and Scrutiny	17	8	3	1	1	4
Licensing and Appeals	13	6	2	1	1	3
Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee	13	6	2	1	1	3
Finance, Regeneration and Property Scrutiny Select Committee	13	6	2	1	1	3
Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee	13	6	2	1	1	3
General Purposes	11	5	2	0	1	3
Joint Standards	11	5	2	0	1	3
Audit	7	3	2	0	0	2
JECC	7	3	2	0	0	2

Committee	Size	Con	Green	Ind All	Lab	Lib. Dem.
Housing Association Liaison Panel	5	2	1	0	1	1
Total Number of Seats	110	50	20	5	8	27
Total Number of Seats Allocated						110

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 The Council is required to review the composition of its committees in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (duty to allocate seats to political groups) and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) regulations 1990.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.3.1 Not applicable.

1.4 Risk Assessment

1.4.1 Not applicable.

1.5 Equality Impact Assessment

1.6 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.7 Recommendations

1.7.1 RECOMMENDED that the composition of all committees, sub-committees, advisory boards and panels be approved in accordance with the table at paragraph 1.1.6 and the Monitoring Officer make any consequential amendments to the Council's constitution in respect of political balance.

Background papers:

Nil

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