
CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES, POLITICAL BALANCE, APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, PANELS AND BOARDS

To: **Council – 10 July 2014**

By: **Democratic Services Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Not applicable**

Summary: This report seeks approval to amend the composition of Committees to reflect political balance, and to note any consequent changes in Group nominations to those Committees.

For Decision

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report informs Council of changes to the political groups and seeks agreement on changes to the political proportionality of the Council and on the allocation of seats on committees to those political Groups.

2.0 Changes to Political Groups

2.1 Councillor Kim Gibson has left the Labour Group and joined the Thanet Independent Group. Councillor John Worrow has left the Thanet Independent Group and joined the Labour Group. Councillor Poole who was not a member of any political Group has joined the Labour Group.

2.2 The following table shows the political balance of the Council both prior to, and following, the change mentioned in paragraph 2.1

Table 1

Group	Prior to changes	After changes
Labour	25	26
Conservative	23	23
Independent Group	3	3
Thanet Independent Group	2	2
UKIP	2	2
Non-groups	1	0

3.0 Political Balance

3.1 It is for Council to decide the number and sizes of committees.

3.2 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to allocate seats on committees to political groups in accordance with the size of each group on the

Council as a whole and in accordance with the following principles which should be observed as far as is reasonably practicable:

- a) That not all seats on the same committee are allocated to the same political group;
- b) That the majority of the seats on a committee are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the Council's membership;
- c) That, subject to a) and b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority; and
- d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of the seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

3.3 For the purposes of political balance a group is required to have at least two members and to have been formally constituted as a political group.

3.4 After consultation with the Leaders of all of the Political Groups consensus was achieved and the following changes were proposed for achieving proportionality:

That one seat is added to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and that seat is given to the Labour Group.

3.5 Table 2 below shows the preferred option for changes to the numbers serving on Committees to reflect the change above:

Table 2

Committees	Total	Labour Group	Conservative Group	Thanet Independent Group	UKIP	Independent Group
Current membership						
Planning Committee	15	7	6	1	0	1
Licensing Board	15	7	6	0	1	1
Overview and Scrutiny Panel	15	7	6	1	0	1
Gov. and Audit	9	4	4	1	0	0
General Purposes	10	4	4	0	1	1
B&EA Working Party	7	3	3	0	1	0
Constitutional Review Working Party	4	2	2	0	0	0
Totals	75	34	31	3	3	4

Preferred Option						
Committees	Total	Labour Group	Conservative Group	Thanet Independent Group	UKIP	Independent Group
Planning Committee	15	7	6	1	0	1
Licensing Board	15	7	6	0	1	1
Overview and Scrutiny Panel	16	8	6	1	0	1
Gov. and Audit	9	4	4	1	0	0
General Purposes	10	4	4	0	1	1
B&EA Working Party	7	3	3	0	1	0
Constitutional Review Working Party	4	2	2	0	0	0
Totals	76	35	31	3	3	4

3.6 The overall political balance calculations for table 2 above can be found at Annex 1.

3.7 Recommendation

3.7.1 That Council agrees the following change to achieve political balance:

That one seat is added to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and that seat is given to the Labour Group.

4.0 Nominations of Members to serve on Committees

- 4.1 Members are reminded that Section 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 states that where the Council has determined the allocation to different groups of the seats to which the Act applies, it shall be the duty of the authority to give effect to a Group's wishes about who is to be appointed to the seats that they have been allocated.
- 4.2 As a result of the changes recommended at paragraph 3.8 the corresponding amendments to group nominations must also be made.
- 4.3 In addition to the changes necessary as a result of the changes recommended above Democratic Services have also been informed that Councillor Campbell will no longer be a Labour Group nomination to the Planning Committee and will be replaced by Councillor Moore.

4.4 Changes to Group Nominations

- 4.4.1 The Labour group will gain a seat on the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and will need to make a new nomination to that Committee. Councillor Gibson was the Labour Group's nomination to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and so the Labour group will need to make a new nomination to that Committee. Councillor Worrow was the Thanet Independent Group's representative on the pool of Planning substitutes, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Governance and Audit Committee and so the Thanet Independent Group will need to make new nominations to each of these Committees. Councillor Campbell was a Labour Group Nomination to the Planning Committee and will be replaced by Councillor Moore. This can be summarised in the table below:

Committee / Group	Current Position	New Position
Overview and Scrutiny Panel		
Labour Group	This is an additional seat	New nominee needed
Labour Group	Cllr Gibson	New nominee needed
Thanet Independent Group	Cllr Worrow	New nominee needed
Planning Committee		
Labour Group	Cllr Campbell	Cllr Moore
Pool of Planning Substitutes		
Thanet Independent Group	Cllr Worrow	New nominee needed
Governance and Audit Committee		
Thanet Independent Group	Cllr Worrow	New nominee needed

4.5 Recommendation

- 4.5.1 To note the corresponding group nominations to Committees and Panels for the remainder of 2014/15 (The names of those Councillors so nominated will be presented at the meeting.)

5.0 Chairmen of Committees

5.1 The changes recommended above remove Councillor Worrow as the Thanet Independent Group representative on the Governance and Audit Committee. Unless the Labour group amend their nominations to the Governance and Audit Committee and make Councillor Worrow a member of the Governance and Audit Committee it will be necessary for Council to appoint a new Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee.

5.1.1 Recommendation

5.1.1 To appoint a new Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee if necessary.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 Financial

6.1.1 There are no direct financial implications.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 The composition and allocation of membership of the above bodies has been based on the relevant legislative requirements.

6.3 Corporate

6.3.1 None

6.4 Equalities

6.4.1 Assessing Relevance

6.4.2 There are no specific equity and equality considerations that need to be addressed in this report. Although there are Councillors within the protected groups, the changes being made are as a result of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

6.4.3 Equality Impact Analysis

6.4.4 N/A

7.0 Summary of Recommendations

3.7.1 That Council agrees the following changes to achieve political balance: That one seat is added to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and that seat is given to the Labour Group.

4.5.1 To note the corresponding group nominations to Committees and Panels for the remainder of 2014/15 (The names of those Councillors so nominated will be presented at the meeting.)

5.1.1 To appoint a new Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee if necessary.

8.0 Decision Making Process

8.1 Council is the decision making body in respect of determining the composition of Committees, etc and also appoints the Chairman of the Governance & Audit Committee.

8.2 Group Leaders determine their nominations to Committees, Panels and Boards.

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Annex List

Annex 1	Proportionality calculations for main committees covered by Local Government & Housing Act 1989
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Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	N/A
Legal	Steven Boyle, Interim Legal Services Manager