

**COUNCIL
1 MAY 2002**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989: REVIEW OF ALLOCATION OF
SEATS AND APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES
(Director of Corporate Services)**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A review of the allocation of committee seats to party groups is conducted each year at the Annual Meeting of the Council, in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. On 27 February the Council was informed that Councillors Grayson and Bettison had served notice, under Regulation 9(b) of those Regulations, that Councillor Grayson wished to be treated as a member of the Conservative Group. This change has been reflected in the allocation review set out in this report.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That:

- (i) the total number of seats on ordinary Committees appointed by the Council shall be 36 and that such seats shall be allocated to party groups as follows:-

Conservative Group – 28 Labour Group – 8

- (ii) Members be appointed to serve on the Standards Committee and on the ordinary Committees in accordance with nominations made by the political groups as set out in the Annexe to the report (to follow).

Name of Committee	Number of Members	Allocation to Groups	Substitute Members
Planning & Highways Committee	20	16 : 4	3 : 3
Employment Committee	8	6 : 2	3 : 3
Licensing & Safety Committee	4	3 : 1	3 : 3
Governor Appointments Committee	4	3 : 1	3 : 3
Total	36	28 : 8	

- (iii) The following formula for the allocation of seats on Sub-Committees to be appointed by Committees be confirmed.

Number of Members	Allocation of Seats
4	3 : 1
8	6 : 2

- (iv) the total number of seats on Select Committees appointed by the Council shall be 40 and that such seats shall be allocated to party groups as follows:-

Conservative Group – 31 Labour Group – 9

- (v) Members be appointed to serve on the following select committees in accordance with nominations made by the political groups as set out in the Annexe to the report.

Name of Committee	Number of Members	Allocation to Groups	Substitute Members
Coordination Select Committee	8	6 or 7: 1 or 2	3 : 3
Select Committee on Corporate & Resource Issues	8	6 or 7: 1 or 2	3 : 3
Select Committee on Economic & Sustainable Development	8	6 or 7 : 1 or 2	3 : 3
Select Committee on Lifelong Learning	8	6 or 7 : 1 or 2	3 : 3
Select Committee on Social Care	8	6 or 7 : 1 or 2	3 : 3
Total	40	31 : 9	

3 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 3.1 Although the allocation of seats to select committees must be politically proportionate these are not ordinary committees and should not be aggregated together with the seats of ordinary committees for the purposes of allocation of seats to party groups by the Council under section 15 (5)(c) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Borough Finance Officer

- 3.2 There are no financial implications arising from the above recommendations.

Access Implications

- 3.3 Not relevant to this report.

4 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Council is required to determine the allocation of seats on ordinary and select committees to political groups for the forthcoming municipal year and to make appointments in accordance with the wishes of the group to which each seat has been allocated. The allocation exercise for the select committees has to be separated from that for the other committees as they are not ordinary committees in the sense of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and cannot be aggregated together in the 'basket' of seats.
- 4.2 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 introduced Regulations in order to ensure that the political balance on Committees reflects the political complexion of the Council. In order to achieve this the Council is required to observe the following principles as far as practicable in making appointments to ordinary Committees ie:
- (a) no Committee should comprise Members drawn from one political group only;
 - (b) the majority of seats on each Committee should be allocated to a political group if the number of members of the group is a majority of the Authority's membership;
 - (c) subject to satisfying (a) and (b) above, the total number of seats allocated to each political group on all ordinary Committees should reflect the political balance of the Council; and
 - (d) subject to (a) – (c) above, the number of seats on each Committee allocated to each political group should reflect the political balance of the Council.
- 4.3 The above four principles apply to all ordinary Committees appointed by the Council and to Sub-Committees appointed by those Committees. The Council has previously agreed that political proportionality rules will not be applied to the Standards Committee.
- 4.4 Following the notice from Councillors Grayson and Bettison in February, the composition of the Council is 31 Conservative (77.5%) and 9 Labour (22.5%). If the Council retains the four ordinary committees provided in the constitution, the following determination should be made.
- (i) That the total number of seats on ordinary committees for the forthcoming municipal year is 36

(ii) That the available seats be allocated to groups as follows:

Conservative Group	28
Labour Group	8

If this determination is agreed then the allocation would be as follows.

Name of Committee	Number of Members	Allocation to Groups
Planning & Highways Committee	20	16 : 4
Employment Committee	8	6 : 2
Licensing & Safety Committee	4	3 : 1
Governor Appointments Committee	4	3 : 1
Total Allocation	36	28 : 8

4.5 This gives a total allocation of 28 seats (77.77%) to the Conservative Group and 8 seats (22.22%) to the Labour Group. In percentage terms this overall allocation is within 0.3% of the respective proportion of seats held by each group on the Council. Overall this represents an acceptable match and would comply with the principles of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 set out above.

4.6 Committees are also required to observe political proportionality when setting the membership of Sub-Committees. The formula by which this should be done is set out below:

Size of Sub-Committee	Allocation of Seats	Proportion
4	3 : 1	75% : 25%
8	6 : 2	75% : 25%

Seats on Select Committees

4.7 Select Committee seats are to be allocated in accordance with the same rules on proportionality set out above. However the allocation is to be carried out separately from the allocation to ordinary committees. If the Council appoints the five select committees in the constitution, the following determination should be made.

(i) That the total number of seats on select committees for the forthcoming municipal year is 40

(ii) That the available seats be allocated to groups as follows:

Conservative Group	31
Labour Group	9

If this determination is agreed then the allocation would be 6 Conservative: 2 Labour members on four of the select committees and 7 Conservative: 1 Labour on one select committee, as follows.

Name of Committee	Number of Members	Allocation to Groups
Co-ordination Select Committee	8	6 or 7 : 1 or 2
Select Committee on Corporate & Resource Issues	8	6 or 7 : 1 or 2
Select Committee on Economic & Sustainable Development	8	6 or 7 : 1 or 2
Select Committee on Lifelong Learning	8#	6 or 7 : 1 or 2
Select Committee on Social Care	8	6 or 7 : 1 or 2
Total Allocation	40	31 : 9

does not include the 2 voting representatives nominated by Oxford and Portsmouth Diocesan Councils and the 2 voting Parent Governor Representatives. If the Council determines that this Committee will be 6:2 then one further 'balancing' member of the Conservative Group can be added to maintain an overall majority.

4.8 Because the total number of seats on select committees is equal to the total number of seats on the Council as a whole it is possible to allocate seats to the party groups in direct proportion. The Council will need to determine on which select committee the Labour Group shall be allocated one seat rather than two.

Background Papers

None – Published Works only

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Doc. Ref

Allocation of Seats 1-5-02