

Council
21 January 2014

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF GOVERNANCE

1. RESIGNATION OF A MEMBER

Council is asked to note that Councillor Ansuya Sodha resigned as a member of the Labour Group on 11 December 2013.

RECOMMEND - That Council note the resignation of Councillor Ansuya Sodha from the Labour Group.

2. CALCULATION OF POLITICAL BALANCE

BACKGROUND

The Council must allocate seats on committees and other prescribed bodies so as to give effect to the political balance rules under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Local Government Committee and Political Group Regulations 1990.

The political balance rules require the Council to ensure that the political groups represented on Council have proportionate representation on the committees of the Council. Political Groups have to constitute two or more Members and be actively constituted as a group in accordance with the above Regulations.

Councils can allocate seats on committees to independent Members not aligned to a Group, but are under no statutory obligation to do so. In March 2013 an additional place was offered to be Independent (non-aligned Member) but not taken up. No seat was allocated to the member at Annual Council in May 2013.

The political proportionality rules also apply to those outside bodies dealing with local government matters to which the council appoints three or more representatives.

This schedule was last approved by Council on 21 May 2013. As a consequence of the resignation of Councillor Ansuya Sodha from the Labour Group on 11 December 2013 to sit as an Independent, a recalculation of the political balance is required.

The report to Annual Council on 21 May 2013 set out in some detail which committees were covered by the requirements for political balance, and where there were specific exceptions. These are not repeated here. The purpose of this report is to recalculate the relevant percentages.

Impact of Resignation of Cllr Sodha to sit as an Independent

Party	Number of Councillors prior to 11 Dec	As percentage	Number of Councillors post 11 Dec	As percentage
Conservative Group	37	58.73%	37	58.73%
Labour Group	22	34.92%	21	33.33%
Liberal Democrat Group	3	4.76%	3	4.76%
Independent/Non-aligned to a Group	1	1.59%	2	3.18%

Achieving Political Balance

The procedure that has been followed in the Council to date has been;

- (a) Determine the percentage split between the political groups represented on the Council.
- (b) Allocate the total number of seats on 'ordinary committees' directly covered by the proportionality rules in the proportions that the political groups have to the membership of the Council.
- (c) Allocate seats on each committee to match the totals in (b), endeavouring to ensure that each individual committee's composition is as close as possible to balance identified in (a) but giving precedence to the need to get as close as possible to overall proportionality.
- (d) Allocate seats on other committees and sub-committees as far as possible to make the political balance referred to in (a) above, but without the requirement to check the balance on the numbers of seats in total.

The political proportionality requirements apply to a total of 17 committees with a total membership of 152 (the control total). Insofar as possible, giving precedence to the need to get as close as possible to overall proportionality, seats on these committees and sub-committees are allocated proportionately. Council on 21 May 2013 applied these principles and the allocations as set out in the table below.

COMMITTEE	NUMBER OF MEMBERS	Conservative	Labour	Lib Dem
Audit Committee	7	4	2	1
Planning and Environment Committee	10	6	3	1
General Functions Committee	7	4	2	1
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	10	6	4	0
Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee	10	6	3	1
Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee	10	6	4	0
Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee	10	6	4	0
Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee	10	6	4	0
Contract Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee	10	6	4	0
Licensing Committee	10	6	4	0
East Area Planning Sub-Committee	10	6	4	0
West Area Planning Sub-Committee	11	7	3	1
Constitution, Ethics and Probity Committee	10	6	3	1
Remuneration Committee	5	3	2	0
Appeals Committee	10	5	5	0
Pensions Fund Committee	7	4	2	1
Leaders' Panel	5	3	1	1
Total	152	90	54	8
%ages	100%	59.2%	35.5%	5.3%

At that time, the percentage split in seats compared to overall representation on the Council was;

- Conservative Group – 59.2% (58.73%)
- Labour Group – 35.5% (34.92%)
- Liberal Democrat Group – 5.3% (4.76%)

The percentage split in seats compared to the current representation on the Council are;

- Conservative Group – 59.2% (58.73%)
- Labour Group – 35.5% (33.33%)
- Liberal Democrat Group – 5.3% (4.76%)

To achieve a closer fit with overall proportionality, one seat should be reallocated from Labour to Conservative. By reallocating one seat the revised percentages would be 59.87% Conservative and 34.87% Labour.

RECOMMEND:

1. That Council note the political balance of the Council is 37 Members of the Conservative Group; 21 Members of the Labour Group; 3 Members of the Liberal Democrat Group and 2 Independent (non-aligned) Members.
2. That Council determine whether the allocation of seats as set out in the table to this report be altered in accordance with the political balance regulations requiring seats to be allocated proportionately to the political groups represented on Council;
3. That Council determine whether it wishes to allocate a seat to either Independent (non-aligned) Member on such Committee as Council may determine.

3. EXECUTIVE DECISIONS EXEMPTED FROM THE 28 DAY NOTICE AND CALL IN

These matters are reported to the Council to meet Constitutional requirements (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.8). No action is required by the Council and the decision has been implemented. In the case listed below, the Chairman of the Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the decision proposed was reasonable in all the circumstances, was urgent and therefore had consented to the proposed decision being exempted from the 28 day notice and call-in:

Delegated Powers Report - 18 December 2013 - Dollis Valley Regeneration Scheme- Deed of Supplemental Agreement to the Dollis Valley Regeneration Agreement

Decision

The Leader of the Council under delegated powers gave authority for the council to enter into a Deed of Supplemental Agreement to allow the parties to waive Conditions Precedent relating to highway stopping up order(s), so that the Regeneration Agreement becomes unconditional in respect of Phase 1 of the proposed regeneration scheme. This avoids delaying the project unnecessarily, and allows the development partner to commence the development programme/demolitions for Phase 1. This will also allow the

Council to transfer the Phase 1 development land, and drawdown from its development partner a large proportion of the Minimum Council Land Value for Phase 1.

RECOMMEND - That Council note the above decision exempted from the Advanced Notification of Executive Decisions

4. VACANCIES ON SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

Council is asked to make appointments to fill the vacancies shown in Appendix 1.