



**COUNCIL:**  
**11 December 2024**

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**Report of: Acting Chief Executive**

**Relevant Lead Member: Councillor Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Legal & Democratic**

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**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE 2024/25**

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Wards affected: (All Wards);

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To review the allocation of seats on Committees to Political Groups, following a reduction in the number of Labour Members.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL**

- 2.1 That, for the period ending with the next Annual Meeting of the Council, or such lesser period should the political balance or allocation to political groups change during the year requiring a review under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the allocation of seats to the political groups be as agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 15 May 2024, subject to:

- (i) Policy & Resources Committee – reduce 1 Labour member, **appoint 1 Independent (Councillor N Furey)**
- (ii) Planning Committee – reduce 1 Labour member, **appoint 1 Independent (Councillor P Hogan)**
- (iii) Audit & Governance Committee – reduce 1 Labour member, **appoint 1 independent (Councillor K Lloyd)**
- (iv) Licensing & Gambling Committee, reduce 1 labour member, **appoint 1 Independent (Councillor K Lloyd)**
- (v) Licensing & Appeals Committee, reduce 1 labour member, **appoint 1 Independent (Councillor N Furey)**
- (vi) Standards Committee, reduce 1 labour member, **appoint 1 Independent (Councillor P Hogan)**

## **3.0 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES etc**

- 3.1 At its Annual Meeting, the Council is under an obligation, under Section 15(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, to review the representation of the Political Groups on Committees and Sub-Committees. Under the Act, the numbers of seats on ordinary Committees have to be aggregated and allocated to the proportion that each political group bears to the total members of the Council, in so far as reasonably practicable. This was undertaken at the Annual meeting in May 2024 when the composition of the Council was Labour 26 members, Conservative 14 members, 'Our West Lancashire' 5 members.
- 3.2 Of the seats available in Committees, these were allocated to the Labour Group, the Conservative Group and Our West Lancashire, in line with the composition above.
- 3.3 Following the resignation of 3 Labour Councillors, a request was received for the political balance on Committees to be reviewed. The Labour Group have 23 Members – 51.1% of the total membership, the Conservative Group continues to have 14 members – 31.1% of the total membership and 'Our West Lancashire' continues to have 5 members (11.1%) of the total membership and there are 3 Independent Members (6.7%).
- 3.4 Of the seats available on the Committees, based on the calculations, recommendations from the Leader for the change in allocation of seats are listed in paragraph 2.1. The allocation of remaining seats (6) not allocated to any Political Group are allocated to the Members who do not belong to a Political Group, at the Council's discretion and in accordance with the regulations.
- 3.5 There is no legal requirement under the 1989 Act to aggregate the number of seats on ordinary sub-committees. The Act simply requires that seats on such sub-committees be allocated to the political groups in the same proportion as each group bears to the whole Council. Political balance rules do not apply to Working Groups.

#### **4.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no significant financial or resource implications arising from this report.

#### **6.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1 Reviewing the political balance on committees ensures that the Council is complying with its obligation, under Section 15(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

#### **7.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

The decision does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

### **Appendices**

None.