

# Gloucester City Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>General Purposes Committee Council</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 January 2020 30 January 2020</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Political Balance on Committees - Review</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Jon McGinty, Head of Paid Service</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Jonathan Lund, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer</b>		
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<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>none</b>		

## FOR GENERAL RELEASE

### 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To make changes to the size and membership of Committees to ensure statutory political balance following a change in the Conservative Group.

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 General Purposes Committee is asked to consider and endorse this report.

- 2.2 Council is asked to **RESOLVE**

- 2.2.1 To reduce the size of all Committees by one with immediate effect;  
2.2.2 To approve the proposed changes to membership of Committees as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

### 3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Councillor Nigel Hanman has resigned from the Conservative Group on the City Council. Councillor Hanman will now sit as an Independent Councillor. There are now 19 Conservative Councillors, 9 Liberal Democrat, 9 Labour and 2 Independent Councillors. Consequently, there is a need to review the political balance of the Council and make any necessary changes to the political composition of committees. It should also be noted that Cllr Lee Hawthorne has a leave of absence, approved by the Council, which runs to the end of May 2020.
- 3.2 Table 1 below indicates the political balance of the Council before and after the resignation

	Old Composition		New Composition	
	Seats	%	Seats	%
Conservative	20	51.3%	19	48.72%
Labour	9	23.1%	9	23.1%
Liberal Democrat	9	23.1%	9	23.1%
Other	1	2.5%	2	5.13%

3.3 To comply with the statutory requirement broadly to reflect the political balance of the Council on each committee (the rules do not apply to Cabinet) it is necessary to ensure that because no one group has an overall majority on the Council no group has an overall majority on each committee and that the numerical parity of the Labour and Liberal Democrat groups is reflected, so far as possible, on each committee. Independent Councillors, unless aligned as an independent group, have no entitlement to seats on Committees, but may be allocated seats.

3.4 To deliver this balance across committees it is necessary to reduce the size of all of the Committees by one place. It is also necessary to alter the political composition of Committees as follows

	Seats	Cons	Lab	Lib Dem	Other
Overview and Scrutiny	16 (-1)	8 (-1)	4	4	0
Planning	12 (-1)	6 (-1)	3	3	0
Licensing & Enforcement	12 (-1)	6 (-1)	3	3	0
Audit and Governance	8 (-1)	4 (-1)	2	2	0
General Purposes	8 (-1)	4 (-1)	2	2	0

3.5 Because the sizes of Committees are set out in the Constitution it is necessary to formally amend the constitution to bring about these changes. To avoid this in future Council has agreed to authorise the Head of Paid Service to amend the Constitution to remove specific committee sizes and allow Group Leaders to agree the political composition and size of Committees, with the Council reserving the right to have a final say if Group Leaders are unable to agree. This change to the Constitution is set out elsewhere on this agenda but is not in place in time to reflect these changes.

3.6 In accordance with Article 14.02(a) of the Council's Constitution, members of the General Purposes Committee will be/have been consulted on these proposals prior to their presentation to Council.

#### **4.0 Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Considerations**

4.1 None

#### **5.0 Alternative Options Considered**

5.1 None

#### **6.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

6.1 To comply with statutory requirements to achieve and maintain political balance on Committees

## **7.0 Future Work and Conclusions**

7.1 None

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 None

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

9.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 require the overall political balance of Council to be reflected in Committees (so far as possible) and to review the political balance when necessary (for example where the political balance changes as a result of a by-election). This report seeks to comply with those obligations.

(One Legal have been consulted in the preparation this report.)

## **10.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

10.1 None

## **11.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:**

11.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact; therefore, a full PIA was not required.

## **12.0 Other Corporate Implications**

### Community Safety

12.1 None

### Sustainability

12.2 None

### Staffing & Trade Union

12.3 None

**Background Documents:** None