

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Council	Date:	19 November 2020
Subject:	Political Balance on Committees - Review		
Report Of:	Jon McGinty, Head of Paid Service		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
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Appendices:	None		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1.0 Purpose of Report

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

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is asked to **RESOLVE** to:

- (1) Approve the proposed changes to membership of Committees as set out in this report.
- (2) Receive and note nominations to the following Committees as required by the proposed changes:
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 1 additional seat (Liberal Democrat)
 - Planning Committee – 1 replacement seat (Labour)

3.0 Background and Key Issues

- 3.1 Councillor Lauren Derbyshire has resigned from the Labour Group on the City Council. Councillor Derbyshire will now sit as an Independent Councillor. There are now 18 Conservative, 9 Liberal Democrat, 8 Labour, 2 Independent Councillors and two vacant seats. Consequently, there is a need to review the political balance of the Council and make any necessary changes to the political composition of committees.
- 3.2 Table 1 below indicates the political balance of the Council before and after the resignation:

	Old Composition		New Composition	
	Seats	%	Seats	%
Conservative	18	48.65%	18	48.65%
Liberal Democrat	9	24.32%	9	24.32%
Labour	9	24.32%	8	21.62%
Other	1	2.70%	2	5.41%

3.3 When applied to the total number of committee seats (56) seats these percentages give the following aggregate entitlement (rounded up/down to the nearest whole seat) for each Group:

Conservative	48.65% of 56 =	27 (27.24)
Liberal Democrat	24.32% of 56 =	14 (13.62)
Labour	21.62% of 56 =	12 (12.11)

Variance in total seats = -3

3.4 Noting that Independent Councillors, unless aligned as an independent group, have no entitlement to seats on Committees, 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 alter the political composition of Committees as follows:

Committee	Size	Con	Lib Dem	Lab	Other	Seat Variance
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16	8	4	3 (-1)	0	-1
Planning Committee	12	6	3	3	0	0
Licensing and Enforcement Committee	12	6	3	3	0	0
Audit and Governance Committee	8	4	2	2	0	0
General Purposes Committee	8	4	2	2	0	0
TOTAL	56	28	14	13 (-1)	0	-1

3.5 The calculation above results in a total variance of -1 seats across all committees/bodies subject to political proportionality. To reach the total available number of seats (56), it is proposed that allocations are adjusted as follows:

Committee	Size	Con	Lib Dem	Lab	Other	Seat Variance
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	16	8	5 (+1)	3	0	0
Planning Committee	12	6	3	3	0	0
Licensing and Enforcement Committee	12	6	3	3	0	0
Audit and Governance Committee	8	4	2	2	0	0
General Purposes Committee	8	4	2	2	0	0
TOTAL	56	28	15 (+1)	13	0	0

3.6 The number of seats based on proportionality and each political party's entitlement is therefore as follows:

	Provisional allocation	Entitlement to seats on committees/bodies based on proportionality/Widdicombe principles	Variation
Conservative	27	28	+1
Liberal Democrat	14	15	+1
Labour	12	13	+1
Other	0	0	0

4.0 Social Value Considerations

4.1 None

5.0 Environmental Considerations

5.1 None.

6.0 Alternative Options Considered

6.1 None

7.0 Reasons for Recommendations

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

8.0 Future Work and Conclusions

8.1 None

9.0 Financial Implications

9.1 None

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

10.0 Legal Implications

10.1 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.)

11.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

11.1 None

12.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA) and Safeguarding:

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

13.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

13.1 None

Sustainability

13.2 None

Staffing & Trade Union

13.3 None

Background Documents: None