

Committee:	Full Council			
Date of Meeting:	03 September 2026			
Subject:	Local Government & Housing Act 1989 – Constitution of Committees (Political Balance) and nominations to vacant seats			
Report Author:	Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer			
Contact Officer:	Mark Turner			
Implications:	Legal	☐	Community Safety	☐
	Equalities	☐	Environment	☐
	Financial	☐	Consultations	☐
	Staffing	☐	Other	☐
Wards Affected:	All			

Purpose

1. To report on the review of the allocation of seats on Council committees and other bodies to political groups.

Recommendations

2. Council is recommended to:

- (i) approve the allocation of seats on Council committees as set out in the table at Appendix A.
- (ii) concur in the appointment of:
 - i. Cllr R Malik to fill the vacancy on Development Management Committee resulting from the resignation of Cllr Franks from that committee; and
 - ii. Cllr Franks to Overview and Scrutiny Board and Cllr Franks and Cllr Miller to the Scrutiny Finance Review Group; and
 - iii. Cllr Keens to Standards Committee; and
 - iv. Cllrs Franks and Stephens to the Local Plan Working Party and the Executive Advisory Group on Extremism respectively, the latter being commended to the Executive for approval.

Background

3. Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ('the 1989 Act') place the Council under a duty to allocate seats to political groups to reflect the political make-up of the Council and to review that allocation at its Annual Meeting and when there are changes to the membership of political groups.
4. The 1989 Act and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 ("the Regulations" apply only to members of the Council who have voting rights. Further, the political balance relates only to the actual number of members elected to the Council at any given time and no account is taken of any vacant seats on the Council. Furthermore, Section 15, setting out how the calculation

is to be made, is strictly construed as applying only to members of political groups. Non-aligned independent members are not included in the calculation.

5. The Council must have regard to the following principles, so far as reasonably practicable, when allocating seats on committees and other bodies to different political groups:
 - (a) not all the seats on a committee are allocated to the same political group;
 - (b) the majority of the seats on a committee are allocated to the political group having the majority of seats on the Council;
 - (c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on each committee which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the Council's ordinary committees as it has to the number of members of that group to Council's membership; and,
 - (d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

Report

6. The Council last reviewed the political balance on its committees at its meeting held on 12th August 2026. Following that meeting two events have taken place that affect the membership of political groups. These are, firstly, the notification on 13th August 2026 by Cllr Franks that he no longer wished to be treated as a member of the Liberal Democrat Group, and, secondly, the notification on 17th August 2026 by Cllr K Malik that she had joined the Independent Alliance Group.
7. Consequently, one seat must transfer from the Liberal Democrat Group to the Independent Alliance Group. A seat on Development Management Committee has been offered and accepted. Cllr R Malik has been nominated to fill the vacancy brought about by the resignation of Cllr Franks from that committee.
8. The resignation of Cllr Franks from the Liberal Democrat Group has resulted in a further vacancy on the Scrutiny Finance Review Group (in addition to the one not filled at the Full Council meeting held on 12th August 2026) and to vacancies on the Overview and Scrutiny Board and Standards Committee. The leaders of the political groups have decided that, in respect of vacancies on the Scrutiny bodies, expressions of interest should, in the first instance, be sought from non-aligned independent Members (that is, Members who are not part of a political group). Cllr Franks has expressed an interest in being appointed to both bodies. Cllr Miller has expressed an interest in the remaining vacancy on the Scrutiny Finance Review Group and Cllr Keens has been nominated to fill the vacancy on Standards Committee.
9. Vacancies on other and outside bodies arising from Cllr Franks' resignation are proposed to be filled as follows:
 - Local Plan Working Party – Cllr Franks has agreed to resume sitting on this body.
 - Executive Advisory Group on Extremism – Cllr Stephens, this nomination being commended to the Executive for approval.

Appendix

10. Appendix A – Allocation of seats

List of Background Papers - Local Government Act 1972, Section 100D

11. Local Government and Housing Act 1989

12. Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990