

REVIEW OF POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY – MAY 2024

Report of the Monitoring Officer

1. The Council is asked to formally review the proportional political allocation of places on committees and to adopt a scheme of proportionality for the Council year 2024/25.
2. By law, seats on committees must be allocated in proportion to the political composition of the Council. An authority can only decide that it wishes to adopt an arrangement other than a proportional one if no Member votes against it.
3. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires that as far as reasonably practicable, the following principles must be adhered to when determining the allocation of seats on committees to political groups:
 - (a) The seats on a committee cannot be allocated to members of one political group.
 - (b) The largest group on the council must be allocated the majority of seats on any committee.
 - (c) Subject to (a) and (b) the total number of committee seats allocated to each political group must reflect the proportion of total members of the authority from each political group.
 - (d) Subject to (a) to (c) above, the number of the seats on a committee which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on the committee as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.
4. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires local authorities to review committee membership and political representation annually and when notice is received of a change in the size of the political groups.
5. There were no by-elections held in May 2024 and the Conservative Group now consists of 44 Members, the Liberal Democrat Group consists of 16 Members, the Residents Association/Independent Group consists of 16 Members, the Labour Group consists of 2 Members, the Green Group consists of 2 Members and there is 1 other Member who is not part of a group.
6. In determining the allocation of seats on ordinary committees, the proportion that each political group forms of the total membership of the Council is applied to the total number of elected Member seats on each committee. Generally, fractional entitlements of less than one half are rounded down and entitlements of one half or more are rounded up. So that this process of rounding does not result in advantage to one political group, the aggregate membership of all the ordinary committees must also be in line with the proportions on the County Council.
7. Due to the principle at 3(b) above that a majority group must have a majority on all committees, the Conservative Group must have 52 seats allocated to them. This is two more seats than the proportionate entitlement and these seats must come from the proportionate allocation of seats to the Residents Association/Independent Group and Liberal Democrat Group, who have an equal entitlement to the number of seats on committees. In agreement with

Group Leaders and in order to ensure compliance with the law, the Liberal Democrat Group have agreed to have two less seats than they would proportionately be entitled to.

8. The number of seats of each group on the Council and the resulting number of seats on committees and percentages are as follows:

	Conser vative	Residents' Association & Independent	Liberal Democ rats	Labo ur	Green	Other	Total
Number of Council seats	44	16	16	2	2	1	81
Number of seats on committees	52	18	16	2	2	1	91
Percentage	58%	20%	18%	2%	2%	1%	100%

N.B The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 require a constituted political group to be two or more members.

9. The proportional allocation of committee seats is set out in Annex 1 below.

RESOLVED:

That Council adopted the scheme of proportionality as set out in Annex 1 to this report for the Council year 2024/25 (Appendix B).

CONTACT

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Director of Law & Governance

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Report to County Council AGM, 23 May 2023
Local Government and Housing Act 1989
Local Government (Committees and Political Groups Regulations) 1990
Proportional Representation Table
Constitution of the Council

SCHEME OF PROPORTIONALITY 2024/25

	CON	RA & IND	LIB DEM	LAB	GREEN	OTHER	To tal	Previous figs
SELECT COMMITTEES								
Adults & Health	7	3	2	1	0	0	13*	13
Children, Families, Lifelong Learning & Culture	7	2	3	0	1	0	13*	13
Communities, Environment & Highways	7	3	2	0	1	0	13	13
Resources & Performance	7	2	2	1	0	1	13	13
PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE	6	3	2	0	0	0	11	11
AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE	4	1	1	0	0	0	6*	6
PEOPLE, PERFORMANCE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	4	1	1	0	0	0	6	6
SURREY PENSION FUND COMMITTEE	4	1	1	0	0	0	6*	6
							81	81
MEMBER CONDUCT PANEL	6	2	2	0	0	0	10	10
TOTAL	52	18	16	2	2	1	91	91

* additional co-opted members are appointed to these committees

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