

MEETING	FULL COUNCIL
DATE	1 May 2014
TITLE OF THE REPORT	The Council's Political Balance
PURPOSE	Annual Review of the Council's Political Balance
RECOMMENDATION	Allocation of seats on the Council's Committees
AUTHOR	Geraint George, Head of Democratic Services

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In 2013/14, two reports were submitted before the Council reviewing the Council's political balance.

1.2 As a result of those reports, the Council's political balance is as follows:

Plaid Cymru	37
Independent	18
Llais Gwynedd	14
Labour	4
Liberal Democrats	2
Individual Member	0

2. ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

2.1 To remind members, the four main rules included in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in relation to the allocation of seats are noted here:-

2.2 (a) Every seat on a committee cannot be allocated to the same political group;

(b) The majority of seats on a committee must be allocated to a political group if the number of persons who are members of that group constitute a majority of the Council's members;

(c) Subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on ordinary committees allocated to each political group will be the same as the number of total seats the members of that group have on the Council;

(ch) Subject to paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) above, the number of seats on a committee allocated to each political group will be the same proportion of seats on the committee as the number of seats the members of that group have on the Council.

2.3 In order to ensure that these rules are adhered to, the Council has been dealing with committees in different blocks in the past. Also, this makes it easier to ensure that rule (c) in paragraph 2.2 above is adhered to.

3. CHAIRPERSONSHIPS AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONSHIPS

3.1 In order to respond to the requirements of the Local Government Measure

(2011) in terms of allocation of chairpersonships and vice-chairpersonships the committees are divided into separate blocks.

- 3.2 In accordance with the requirements of sections 66-75 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 it was a requirement to allocate the chairpersonships of scrutiny committees in order to ensure, as far as possible, that political balance was reflected in those chairpersonships and that the groups that were not represented on the executive were given a fair proportion of the chairpersonships.
- 3.3 The only committees in which the chairs are to be allocated on the basis of political balance are the following Scrutiny Committees. In accordance with the agreement of the Council's Business Group, the chairpersonships are allocated as follows to reflect the custom whereby the vice-chairs step into the chair naturally.
- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| Corporate | Plaid Cymru |
| Communities | Independent |
| Services | Llais Gwynedd |
- 3.4 In accordance with section 83 of the Measure, the chairperson of the Audit Committee cannot be a member of a political group which is represented on the executive.
- 3.5 It is recommended that the allocation to the chairpersonships remains consistent with the allocation in 2013/14, in line with the statutory rules.
- 3.6 There are no statutory or constitutional provisions to control the appointments to the vice-chairpersonships or to the chairpersonships of the remaining committees (other than a member of the executive cannot chair the Licensing Committee).
- 3.7 However, the sense of vice-chairs stepping into the chairs of the scrutiny committees has been discussed by the Business Group and agreement was obtained that they would be divided between the Plaid Cymru, Independent and Llais Gwynedd groups so that vice-chairs can step into the chairs without obstruction in due course.
- 3.8 The committees themselves will elect their chairpersons in these cases subject to the procedural rules which limit the term of a Chairperson to two years.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The Council is asked to:
- adopt the allocation in Appendix A, which is consistent with what was adopted on 5 December 2013.
 - delegate the power to the Head of Democratic Services to make appointments to the committees on the basis of political balance and in accordance with the wishes of the political groups.
 - allocate the chairpersonships of scrutiny committees on the basis of political balance as follows:
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|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Corporate Scrutiny Committee | Plaid Cymru |
| Communities Scrutiny Committee | Independent |
| Services Scrutiny Committee | Llais Gwynedd |

APPENDIX A

SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Corporate	9	4	3	1	1	
Communities	9	4	3	1	1	
Services	9	4	4	1		
Audit	9	5	3	1		0

OTHER COMMITTEES

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Democratic Services	7	4	3	1		
Planning	7	3	3	1	1	
Central Licensing	7	4	4	0		
Language	8	4	3			
Appointment of Principal Officers	7	4	2	1	1	
Employment Appeals	4	1	1	1		

Number of seats	76	37	28	8	4	0	154
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	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Pensions	3	2	1		1	
SACRE	3	2	2			
Local Consultative Joint Committee	6	2	2	1		
Special Educational Needs Joint	4	2	1			

Committee						
Joint Planning Policy Committee	4 (three seats and one substitute)	2	1	1		0

Total seats	96	47	36	10	5	0	194
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