

**Allocation of Seats to Political Groups  
13 May 2024  
Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and  
Elections**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To advise Council of the calculations relating to the allocation of seats in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to allow Council to appoint to Committees as required at the annual meeting, as set out in Part 3, Section 1, Paragraph 1 (h) of the Constitution.

This report is public.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) **That in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989 and Part 4 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations, 1990, the City Council approves the calculations and allocation of seats set out in this report, including the adjustments set out in paragraph 4.**

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 It is necessary to present a calculation of political composition to Council at each annual meeting to determine the political balance on the council's committees. Re-calculations are made as and when the political make-up of the council changes.

**2.0 Composition of the Council**

- 2.1 The make-up of the Council following by-elections in March and May 2024 is the same as at the Annual Council meeting in May 2023:-

Labour	24
Green	21
Liberal Democrat	7
Conservative	5
Morecambe Bay Independents (MBI)	3
Independent Member (non-aligned)	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61</b>

**3.0 Seats Across Committees**

- 3.1 There is a total of 78 seats available across all committees. Calculating each committee separately and individually gives the results shown in 3.2 below:-

3.2 15 Member Committee (Planning Regulatory)

Labour	$24/60 \times 15 = 6.0000$	(6)
Green	$21/60 \times 15 = 5.2500$	(5)
Liberal Democrat	$7/60 \times 15 = 1.7499$	(2)
Conservative	$5/60 \times 15 = 1.2499$	(1)
MBI	$3/60 \times 15 = 0.7500$	(1)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>(15)</b>

10 Member Committee (Licensing Regulatory)

Labour	$24/60 \times 10 = 4.0000$	(4)
Green	$21/60 \times 10 = 3.5000$	(3.5)*
Liberal Democrat	$7/60 \times 10 = 1.1666$	(1)
Conservative	$5/60 \times 10 = 0.8333$	(1)
MBI	$3/60 \times 10 = 0.5000$	(0.5)*
	<b>Total</b>	<b>(10)</b>

\*There are only 10 seats, so the Green and MBI groups tie for a place rather than rounding up for a place each

9 Member Committees x 2 (Overview and Scrutiny, Budget and Performance)

Labour	$24/60 \times 9 = 3.6000$	(4)
Green	$21/60 \times 9 = 3.1500$	(3)
Liberal Democrat	$7/60 \times 9 = 1.0499$	(1)
Conservative	$5/60 \times 9 = 0.7499$	(1)
MBI	$3/60 \times 9 = 0.4500$	(0)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>(9)</b>

7 Member Committees x 5 (Personnel, Audit, CBC, Appeals, Standards)

Labour	$24/60 \times 7 = 2.8000$	(3)
Green	$21/60 \times 7 = 2.4500$	(2)
Liberal Democrat	$7/60 \times 7 = 0.8166$	(1)
Conservative	$5/60 \times 7 = 0.5833$	(1)
MBI	$3/60 \times 7 = 0.3500$	(0)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>(7)</b>

3.3 The figures above would give an overall total out of the 78 seats of:-

Labour	$6+4+8+15$	$= 33$
Green	$5+3.5+6+10$	$= 24.5$
Liberal Democrat	$2+1+2+5$	$= 10$
Conservative	$1+1+2+5$	$= 9$
MBI	$1+0.5$	$= 1.5$
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>78</u></b>

3.4 However, the calculation of the 78 committee places on all standing committees cannot be calculated separately and individually. It **must** be undertaken using rules A-E, set out in s. 15(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Those rules are explained in **Appendix A** and the aggregate calculation is show below:-

#### 4.0 Aggregate Calculation (RULE C)

Political Group	Number in each group/total number of Cllrs in political groups (60) X total number of committee seats (78)	Actual	Rounded
Labour	24/60x78	31.2000	<b>31</b>
Green	21/60x78	27.3000	<b>27</b>
Liberal Democrat	7/60x78	9.0999	<b>9</b>
Conservative	5/60x78	6.4999	<b>7*</b>
MBI	3/60x78	3.9000	<b>4</b>
			<b>(78)</b>

*\*It should be noted that the Conservative Group, as the group with the largest residual, has been rounded up from 6 seats overall, to 7 seats overall.*

- 4.1 The end column above shows the overall number of seats that each group will receive, whilst attempting to stay as closely as possible to the balance of seats shown on each committee in paragraph 3.2
- 4.2 The sheets attached show how seats were arranged from 2023/24. Group Administrators have been asked to confirm to the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections that the same arrangement will be used for 2024/25. Groups are welcome to agree a different arrangement amongst themselves of course, as long as those arrangements adhere to the allocation rules in **Appendix A**.
- 4.3 A request has also been made for supply to Democratic Support of the names of group appointments in advance of the meeting once the arrangement of seats is agreed. This is to save time at the meeting.

#### 5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 Members are requested to agree the calculation so that appointments can be made to Committees.

#### **CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

There are no direct implications as a result of this report.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989 and Part 4 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Affiliation to Political Groups document held by Democratic Support.

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## **THE RULES**

The main rules are set out in s. 15(5) LGHA, and they are to be applied sequentially. So Rule B cannot override Rule A; Rule C cannot override Rules A and B; and Rule D cannot override Rules A, B or C. An additional rule is set out in s. 16.

**Rule A:** all the seats on a committee or sub-committee may not be allocated to members of the same political Group. Note that this does not require that each political Group needs to be represented on each committee or sub-committee.

**Rule B:** where a majority of the members of Council are members of the same political Group, a majority of the seats on each committee and sub-committee must be allocated to that political Group. So, where there is a majority Group, it must be allocated a minimum of 2 seats on each committee or sub-committee of 3 members, 3 seats on each committee or sub-committee of 4 members, and so on. This means that, where a political Group enjoys a narrow majority on Council, that majority Group will be allocated significantly more seats than would result from simple proportionality. Incidentally, the combination of Rules A and B reinforces the point that the minimum size of a committee or sub-committee ought to be 3.

**Rule C:** deals with the aggregate of seats on all committees, taken together. [It does not apply to sub-committees, joint committees or outside bodies (see later)]. It provides that, subject to Rules A and B, the relationship between the total number of committee seats allocated to each Group and the total number of seats on all committees must, as near as possible, be the same as the relationship between the number of members of the Group as a proportion of the total number of members of Council. This is subject to Rules A and B.

**Rule D:** Having worked out how many committee seats are to be allocated to each political Group, Rule D then determines which committees those seats relate to. Rule D now says that, taking each committee separately, the seats on that committee must be allocated as close to proportionately as possible, without offending Rules A, B or C

There is also a "**Rule E**", inserted into s.16 by reg. 16(3), which provides that, where appointments to seats are to be made other than in accordance with Rules A to D (i.e. to seats which are not allocated to a political Group) then the Council or the committee must appoint members to those seats who are not members of a political Group. The exact wording is:

*“(2A) Where appointments fall to be made to seats on a body to which section 15 applies otherwise than in accordance with a determination under that section, it shall be the duty of the authority or the committee, as the case may be, so to exercise their power to make appointments as to secure that the persons appointed to those seats are not members of any political Group.”*