



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

COUNCIL

22 March 2023

Report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Changes to Political Balance and Committee Memberships

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Under Regulation 8(1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the Proper Officer has received notification that Councillors Rose and Stevenson wish to be treated as a political group.
- 1.2 The notification states that the Group will be known as the Reform UK Group and that Councillor Rose is to be recognised as the Group Leader. The creation of a fourth political group results in changes to the political balance and allocation of seats to Committees and this report purposes to make the necessary changes.

2. Information and Analysis

Committee Membership

- 2.1 In determining the membership of committees, account must be taken of the requirements of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 as amended made under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. These regulations require that seats on committees and sub-committees are allocated in a way which reflects the overall political balance of the Council and that the Council gives effect to the wishes of the political groups in the appointments to those seats.

2.2 Allocation of seats by a Council must give effect to the following principles set out in the 1989 Act. The principles have to be applied in priority order as follows:

- (a) that not all the seats are allocated to the same political group;
- (b) that the majority of seats are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group are a majority of the authority's membership;
- (c) subject to (a) and (b) above, that the total number of all seats of the ordinary committees allocated to each particular political group reflects the group's proportion to the membership of the authority;
- (d) subject to (a) – (c) above, that the number of seats allocated to a particular political group reflects that group's proportion of the membership of the authority.

2.3 Derbyshire County Council has one elected member that has not joined a political group. A political group is defined as comprising two or more members. Members who are not members of a political group are not automatically entitled to seats on committees, however as long as the principles of proportionality outlined above are respected and no member votes against the recommendation, the Act does not prevent Councils choosing to offer seats to unaligned/non-grouped members.

2.4 The current political make-up of the Council is:

Conservative Group	42
Labour Group	15
Liberal Democrat Group	4
Reform UK Group	2
Green Councillor	1

There are a total of 100 committee seats to be allocated for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year. The allocation of seats on the committees and sub-committees of the Council is, therefore, as follows:

Committee	Total Seats	Con	Lab	Lib dem	Reform UK	Green
Appointments and Conditions of Service	8	6	2	0	0	0
Audit	6	4	1	0	1	0
DCC Trading	5	4	1	0	0	0
Governance Ethics and Standards	8	6	2	0	0	0

Committee	Total Seats	Con	Lab	Lib dem	Reform UK	Green
I&S - Climate	10	6	2	1	0	1
I&S - Health	9	6	2	1	0	0
I&S - People	9	5	2	1	1	0
I&S - Places	9	6	2	1	0	0
I&S - Resources	9	6	3	0	0	0
Pensions and Investments	8	5	1	1	1	0
Planning Delegation Sub	4	3	1	0	0	0
Regulatory – Planning	10	7	2	1	0	0
SACRE	5	3	2	0	0	0
Total	100	67	23	6	3	1

2.5 The Reform UK Group needs to be allocated two additional seats across the Committees of the Council.

2.6 In order to facilitate the required changes to representatives, the Group Leaders of the Conservative and Reform UK Groups have provided the necessary nominations to seats.

3. Consultation

3.1 There is no requirement for public consultation on this report. Relevant Political Groups have been contacted for their nominations as appropriate.

4. Alternative Options Considered

4.1 The Council must make the appointments to Committees to ensure political balance, although members could choose to make different appointments to those suggested.

5. Implications

5.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

6. Background Papers

6.1 None identified

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1 – Implications

8. Recommendation(s)

That Council:

Approves the following changes to representation on committees:

- 1) Replace Councillor Gourlay with Councillor Rose as a member of the Audit Committee; and
- 2) Replace Councillor Ashton with Councillor Stevenson as a member of the Pensions and Investment Committee

9. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 9.1 To ensure that the Committees of the Council are politically balanced as required by relevant legislation.
- 9.2 To ensure that the Council has sufficient membership on its committees that reflect the wishes of political groups.

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Implications

Financial

- 1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising this report as the changes do not result in the need to pay additional Special Responsibility Allowances

Legal

- 2.1 Legal implications have been considered in the body of the report.

Human Resources

- 3.1 None

Information Technology

- 4.1 None

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 None

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 6.1 None

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental, Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

- 7.1 None