

**COUNCIL**  
**16 JANUARY 2020****CONSTITUTIONAL REPORT - BROMSGROVE SOUTH BY-ELECTION AND POLITICAL BALANCE****Recommendation**

- 1. The Assistant Director for Legal and Governance recommends that Council approves the recalculation of political balance set out as an Appendix and requires him to give effect to it in accordance with the nominations from the respective Group leaders from time to time.**

**Executive Summary**

2. As a result of the Bromsgrove South by-election, the Appendix sets out a proposed allocation of seats amongst the political Groups which meets the rules of political balance by reducing Labour's allocation by 2 seats and consequently reducing the total number of committee seats by 2 to a total of 101. There are no other changes.

**Background details**

3. Following the resignation of Mr C J Bloore, the Bromsgrove South by-election took place on Thursday 31 October. The successful candidate was Mr K Daisley, who has joined the Conservative Group.

4. As a result, the Conservative Group increased by 1 member (from 40 to 41), and the Labour Group reduced by 1 member (from 10 to 9). This impacted on political balance ie the number of seats on committees allocated to those 2 political Groups.

5. However, on 5 November 2019, Mr R Bennett resigned from the Conservative Group and is currently not a member of any Group. Therefore the Conservative Group has returned to 40 members, and does not gain any committee seats as there is no net increase in its size. The Labour Group still loses 2 seats as a result of its reduction in size, but no other Group gains an entitlement to them.

6. It is therefore proposed that the Labour Group loses a seat on the Planning and Regulatory Committee (which reduces in size by 1) and on the Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel (which also reduces in size by 1).

7. The membership of the political Groups as of 1 January 2020 is:

- Conservative 40 (no net change)
- Labour 9 (-1)
- 2017 5
- Independent Alliance 2

(There is 1 non-Grouped member).

7. Legislation requires that the allocation of seats on ordinary committees must, as far as reasonably practicable, be in accordance with the principles of political balance. These principles are based on the membership of political Groups within the Council which members join, rather than political parties as such.

8. Political balance principles are that the majority Group is entitled to a majority on each committee; subject to this, the aggregate allocation of committee seats overall should reflect political balance, and subject to this, individual committee membership should reflect political balance as far as practicable. Council can depart from these principles in allocating seats provided no member votes against doing so.

9. A proposed allocation of seats on Committees is set out in the Appendix reflecting the political composition of the Council, and which is compliant with the principles of political balance.

10. Changes in the individual membership of committees would be made by the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance in accordance with the nominations from the respective political Groups in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

## **Contact Points**

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## **Supporting information**

Appendix – Political Structures – Proposed Allocation of Places

## **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance), there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report item.