

Title of meeting: City Council

Date of meeting: 6 December 2022

Subject: Review of Political Proportionality on Committees and Panels

Report by: Chief Executive

Wards affected: N/A

Key decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 Councillor Judith Smyth is no longer a member of the Labour Group and is consequently now a non-aligned independent councillor on the council. Therefore, there is a need, under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, to review the allocation of seats upon Committees and Panels.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Council

- (a) **Determine the allocation of seats on committees and panels based on the information set out overleaf in the proportionality chart, having regard to the suggested way forward detailed below and any inter-group agreement (reflected within the report).**
- (b) **Ratify consequent named membership changes proposed at the meeting.**

3. Background Information and implications

- 3.1 As a result of a change in group strengths, consequent seats on committees are as shown in Table 1 at para 3.3 overleaf to be considered in conjunction with the suggested way forward set out below (the figures in brackets indicate the position prior to the change).

3.2 Proposed allocation of Seats for 2022/23 (Table 1) below

The representation of groups must be in accordance with the rules set out in the relevant legislation. Details of the proposed allocation of places on Panels and Committees are set out below - The suggested way forward is detailed underneath the table.

3.3 Notwithstanding the relevant legislation, political groups may gift their seats to other groups or non-aligned independent councillor if they so wish. Notification has been received from the Labour Group that they wish to gift one of their seats from Group 2 (Planning Committee) to Councillor Smyth. Consequently, Councillor Smyth will have a total of three committee seats.

Proportionality Chart - figures in brackets indicate positions prior to the change in Group Strengths. The figures not in bold reflect the recalculated proportionality following the change in group strengths. The figures in bold reflect the gifting one Labour Group seat to Councillor Smyth as detailed in para 3.3.

	Group Strength	Total Seats	Licensing Gp 1	Planning Gp 2	Regulatory./ Scrutiny Gp 3	Scrutiny Mngt Panel Gp 4
Conservative	13	24	5	3	13	3
Liberal Democrat	17	31	6	4	17	4
Labour	(9) 8	(16) 14 13	3/2*	2 1	(9) 8/7*	2
Portsmouth Independent Party Group	3	5	1	1	3	0
Independent Councillor	1	2 3	0/1*	0 1	1/2*	0
	42	76	15	10	42	9

Note1: Asterisk indicates the two options in respect of Group 1 & Group 3.

Note 2: Group 3 contains the following: Governance & Audit & Standards; Employment; & Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel; and the four themed scrutiny panels.

3.4 Previously, Councillor Smyth was a Labour Group appointment on the Planning Committee (as well as Chair), the Governance & Audit & Standards Committee and the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel. She was also a Labour Group Standing Deputy on both the Housing & Social Care Scrutiny Panel and the Scrutiny Management Panel. In addition she was the Labour Group opposition spokesperson for the Planning Policy & City Development Portfolio, which is a matter for the Group Leader to appoint to.

3.5 Based upon the arithmetical proportionality calculations, as a non-aligned independent councillor, Cllr Smyth has a total of two seats on the Council. One on a Group 3 body and the other is on the Licensing Committee (Group 1). As a former member of the Labour Group, the revised political balance dictates that the Labour Group lose two

seats overall from the same above groups of meetings.

- 3.6 As detailed in paragraph 3.3, the Labour Group wish to gift one of its seats from Group 2 (Planning Committee) to Councillor Smyth. Consequently, Councillor Smyth will have a total of three committee seats.
- 3.7 Mathematically, Cllr Smyth has the right to sit on a Group 3 committee and previously sat on the Governance & Audit & Standards Committee and the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel.
- 3.8 Mathematically, Cllr Smyth would also gain a seat on the Licensing Committee. However, in order to minimise disruption, it is within the power of Council to alternatively appoint her to an additional Group 3 seat instead. This would result in her regaining her previous appointments and would not compromise the overall proportionality of the Council.
- 3.9 Upon there being a change to group memberships, the affected member(s) lose their seats on committees until a revised proportionality calculation and subsequent appointments to committees are agreed by Council. This being the case, Full Council is invited to elect a Chairman for the Planning Committee.

- 4. **Legal Implications** - legal comments are embodied in the report
- 5. **Finance Comments** - none in relation to this report
- 6. **Integrated impact assessment (IIA)**

This report does not require an Equality Impact Assessment as the proposals contained within this report do not have any impact upon a particular equalities group.

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Signed by: Chief Executive

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

None.

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on