

COUNCIL
23 OCTOBER 2018

POLITICAL BALANCE, OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

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1. Area Affected

1.1 County Borough wide.

2. Purpose of Report

2.1 To inform members of the political balance requirements and seek agreement to the political balance for the remainder of the year ahead until AGM in May 2019.

3. Recommendation

3.1 That Council agrees the political balance and adopts the political balance calculations attached at Appendix A to this report (to follow).

3.2 That Council appoints Cllr Jason O'Connell as Chair of Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the year ahead until AGM in May 2019.

3.3 That Council appoints members to serve on the committees and other bodies listed in Appendix B of this report (to follow) in line with the agreed political balance.

4. Background - Political Balance Requirements

4.1 Current legislation requires the distribution of seats on committees and sub-committees to be on the basis of political proportionality, so far as is reasonably practicable. The distribution of committee places between political groups needs to have regard to these rules. Therefore political groups are entitled to seats on committees in proportion to their membership of the Council as a whole.

4.2 Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees also need to be appointed according to the principles of political balance.

4.3 This means that Council is required to agree the political balance and then allocate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs, and seats on Committees to each political group in line with the agreed political balance.

5. Allocation of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs and committee seats.

5.1 Cllr Jason O'Connell has recently left the Independent Group at Torfaen County

Borough Council and has become a member of the Torfaen Conservative Group.

- 5.2 This has changed the political balance of the Council as shown in the attached Appendix A (to follow).
- 5.3 The statutory guidance to the local government measure 2011 states opposition groups should be allocated overview and scrutiny committee chairs in proportion to their membership.
- 5.4 Taking the revised political balance into account the allocation of overview and scrutiny chairs now needs to be adjusted:
- the Independent Group being entitled to one overview and scrutiny chair (Safer Communities); and
 - the Conservative Group being entitled to one overview and scrutiny chair (Healthier Communities).
- 5.5 The Leader of the Conservative Group has confirmed the Chair of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee should remain unchanged, (Cllr Jason O'Connell), for the remainder of the year ahead until AGM in May 2019.
- 5.6 To ensure the Council appoints members to serve on committees in line with revised political balance, nominations for the remainder of the year until the next AGM have been sought from all political leaders. These are set out in full in appendix B (to follow) for approval.

6. **Recommendation**

- 6.1 That Council agrees the change in political balance and adopts the political balance calculations attached at Appendix A (to follow) to this report.
- 6.2 That Council appoints Cllr Jason O'Connell as Chair of Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the year ahead until AGM in May 2019.
- 6.3 That Council appoints members to serve on the committees and other bodies listed in Appendix B (to follow) to this report in line with the agreed political balance.

Appendices	Appendix A - Political Balance (to follow) Appendix B – Composite list of all nominations (to follow)
Background Papers	Local Government and Housing Act 1989; Local Government (Committees and Political Group) Regulations 1990 and as amended in 1996. Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011
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