

Committee: Annual Council

Date:

Title: Political Balance 2025/26

Thursday, 22 May
2025

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Summary

1. As required at the annual meeting, this report considers the political composition of the Council and recommends that seats on the main committees be allocated to the political groups as detailed in the report.
2. The Council's political composition is 21 Residents for Uttlesford, 11 Conservative Party, 4 Liberal Democrats, 2 Uttlesford Independent Group and 1 Reform UK.
3. Political balance remains unchanged from the report considered by Council at the meeting on 22 April 2025.
4. As per the Local Government Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the political balance calculation is based only on councillors who are members of a political group, with formal political groups requiring at least two members. Therefore, the calculation has been carried out incorporating members in formal political groups only.

Recommendations

5. That the Council approves:
 - I. The political balance and the allocation of seats on its committees as detailed in the report.

Financial Implications

6. None.

Background Papers

7. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

None.

Impact

- 8.

Communication/Consultation	Group Leaders have been consulted on political balance and nominations have been put forward for member appointments.
Community Safety	None.
Equalities	None.
Health and Safety	None.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	The political balance calculation is in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Local Government Housing Act 1989 and Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.
Sustainability	None.
Ward-specific impacts	None.
Workforce/Workplace	None.

Situation

9. The Local Government Housing Act 1989 requires local authorities to review the representation of the different political groups and allocate the seats on their committees to political groups represented in accordance, so far as reasonably practicable, with the following four principles of proportionality:-
 - a) that not all seats on the body concerned are allocated to the same political group;
 - b) that the majority of the seats on the body are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
 - c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of an authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority;
 - d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of the seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

10. The number of seats on ordinary committees of the Council is proposed as follows; this remains unchanged from the number of seats agreed at the Annual Council meeting in May 2024 (or the previous meeting on 22 April 2025):

Committee	Number of Seats
Audit and Standards	11
Licensing and Environmental Health	10
Planning	9
Scrutiny	11
Appointments Committee	7
Investigatory and Disciplinary Committee	5
Appeals Committee	5
Total	58

11. Based on the 58 seats, the number of seats available to each group is:

Group	Percentage	Calculated Seats	Number of Seats
Residents for Uttlesford	55.26%	32.05	32
Liberal Democrat	10.53%	6.11	6
Conservative	28.95%	16.79	17
Uttlesford Independents	5.26%	3.05	3
Total	100%	58	58

Licensing and Environmental Health Committee

12. The Licensing Committee cannot be taken into account for the purposes of the calculation because it is not a Committee to which the Local Government Act 1972 applies. However, it is proposed that the ten places available to be allocated to the Licensing Committee and agreed by Council be calculated on the same basis of proportionality applied to those Committees falling under the 1972 Act. It is a requirement that the Licensing Committee has between 10-15 Members.

Proposal for Allocation of Seats

13. The allocation of the 58 seats is therefore proposed as follows:

Committee	No. Seats	R4U	LD	CONs	IND
Planning	9	5	1	2	1
Licensing and Environmental Health	10	6	1	3	0
Scrutiny	11	6	1	3	1
Appointments	7	4	1	2	0
Audit and Standards	11	5	1	4	1
IDC	5	3	0	2	0
AC	5	3	1	1	0
Total seats	58	32	6	17	3

Risk Analysis

14. There are no risks associated with this report.