



# Council 17 May 2012

## Review of Political Balance and Appointment of Committees, Sub-Committee and Working Party

### 1. Background

1.1 The Council is required by the Constitution to review the political balance and allocation of seats to committees each year at the Annual Meeting in May.

1.2 The political balance of the Council is as indicated in the following table:-

	CON-SERVATIVE	INDEPENDENT GROUP	LABOUR	INDEPENDENT
Members	38	3	3	1
Expressed as %	84.44%	6.67%	6.67%	2.22%

1.3 The Council will need to formally approve the formula for the allocation of seats to the political groups on those Committees which are required by law to be politically balanced.

1.4 The table below shows the exact entitlement of places and the places **currently** held by each Group and Independent Member.

Seats Available	Committee	CON-SERVATIVE		INDEPENDENT GROUP		LABOUR		IND	
		Exact Fig	Actual Places	Exact Fig	Actual Places	Exact Fig	Actual Places	Exact Fig	Actual Places
16	Development Control	13.51	14	1.07	1	1.07	1	0.35	-
13	Licensing & Regulatory	10.97	11	0.87	1	0.87	1	0.29	-
7	Officer Appointments	5.91	6	0.47	1	0.47	-	0.15	-
16	Overview & Scrutiny	13.51	13	1.07	1	1.07	1	0.35	1
10	Performance & Audit Scrutiny	8.44	8	0.67	1	0.67	1	0.22	-
7	Staffing Appeals	5.91	6	0.47	-	0.47	1	0.15	-
Total 69			58	plus	5	plus	5	plus	1
Exact overall entitlement based on the overall percentage on full Council (7.1)		58.27		4.60		4.60		1.53	

- 1.5 The Democratic Renewal Working Party is not required to be politically balanced but the allocation of seats is, by custom and practice, undertaken on this basis. The allocation of seats according to the formula is as follows:-

Seats Available	Committee	CON-SERVATIVE		INDEPENDENT GROUP		LABOUR		IND	
		Exact Fig	Actual Places	Exact Fig	Actual Places	Exact Fig	Actual Places	Exact Fig	Actual Places
7	Democratic Renewal Working Party	5.91	6	0.47	1	0.47	-	0.15	-
7			6		1		-		-
EXACT ENTITLEMENT			5.91		0.47		0.47		0.15

- 1.6 Under the Localism Act, the current provisions for a Code of Conduct, Standards Committee and consideration of complaints is to be replaced by local arrangements. The Act does not require Councils to have a Standards Committee *per se*, but it does require that Councils “promote and maintain high standards of conduct”. If Councils do have a Standards Committee then there is no provision in the Act to continue the current obligations to have independent and parish representatives on the Committee with equal voting rights to the Borough Council members.
- 1.7 On 19 June 2012, Council will be asked to determine a new standards regime to take effect from 1 July 2012. Consequently, Council is asked to approve the continuation of current arrangements until 30 June, with the Standards Committee comprising:-
- (a) three Borough Councillors;
  - (b) three Independent Members (people who are not Councillors or officers of the Council or any other body having a Standards Committee); and
  - (c) three members of parish/town Councils wholly or mainly in the Council's area (Parish Members).
- 1.8 The Council's Constitution states that the Mayoral Advisory Committee shall comprise 7 Members of the Authority appointed annually by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in accordance with the nominations of Group Leaders. The composition of the Committee shall reflect the political group representation on the Council. The Committee should, therefore, comprise 6 Conservative Members and one non-Conservative Member.
- 1.9 There is a need to appoint Members to the Treasury Management Sub-Committee before its 'parent' body, the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, has met. Therefore, the Council is requested to approve that delegated authority be given to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with Group Leaders and the Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, to appoint 3 full Members and a Substitute Member of the Committee to the Treasury Management Sub-Committee.

## 2. Recommendations

2.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:-

- (1) the allocation of seats on the Committees of the political groups of the Borough Council as indicated in paragraph 1.4 of Report D1 be approved;
- (2) the allocation of seats on the Democratic Renewal Working Party of the political groups of the Borough Council, as indicated in paragraph 1.5 of Report D1 be approved;
- (3) the allocation of seats on the Standards Committee as indicated in paragraph 1.7 of Report D1 be approved;
- (4) the allocation of seats on the Mayoral Advisory Committee as indicated in paragraph 1.8 of Report D1 be approved;
- (5) the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be given delegated authority to appoint Members and substitute Members of these Committees and Democratic Renewal Working Party in (1), (2), (3) and (4) above on the basis of nominations from the relevant Group Leaders; and
- (6) the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be given delegated authority to appoint 3 full Members and one Substitute Member from the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to the Treasury Management Sub-Committee, in consultation with Group Leaders and the Chairman of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

For further information please contact:-

Steven Lincoln, Committee Services Manager,

Telephone: (01284) 757108 or email: [steven.lincoln@stedsbc.gov.uk](mailto:steven.lincoln@stedsbc.gov.uk)