

Report to COUNCIL

Review of Political Balance on Committees

Officer Contact: Heather Moore, Assistant Director of Governance

Report Author: Peter Thompson, Interim Head of Democratic Services

Ext. 4716

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Reason for Decision

Since the last meeting of the Council, on 16th July 2025, the Chief Executive received notification, on Friday 12th September 2025, that Councillors Ball, Quigg and Wilkinson will henceforth sit as Reform UK Members and Monday, 6th October that Councillors Adams and Arnott have joined the Conservative Group.

Considering this, the Council is asked to review the political composition of committees and to note the composition of the political groups as previously notified under Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and under Section 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 for the remainder of the 2025/26 municipal year. The effect, in terms of committee places is that the Conservatives will gain the seats that the Royton Local group held on Planning Committee, Licensing Committee and the Adults Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board but will cede their seat on the Audit Committee to Reform UK. Reform UK will have seats on the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board, the Audit Committee, the Commons Registration Committee, the Charitable Trust Committee and the Appeals Committee. The Royton Independents will cede their seat on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board to the Conservative Group but will gain a seat on the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board.

Recommendations

- (a) That the revised composition of the political groups as shown in paragraph 1.1, below, be noted.

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- (b) The number of seats on the various Committees for the remainder of the 2025/26 Municipal Year be as detailed in paragraph 1.5, below, be noted.
 - (c) Any outstanding appointments to be delegated to the Chief Executive in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group.

Appointment of Committees and Composition of Political Groups

1 Background

The Council is asked to review the political composition of committees and to note the composition of the political groups as previously notified under Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. On 12th September 2025, Councillors Ball, Quigg and Wilkinson gave notice that they will henceforth serve on the Council as Reform UK members. The Leader of the Reform UK Group of Members will be Councillor Quigg. On Monday, 6th October, Councillors Adams and Arnott gave notice that they will, with immediate effect be joining the Conservative Group. The Conservative Group will now contain six Councillors. There are no longer any members of the Council who are not affiliated to any political group represented on the Council.

The effect in terms of committee places are that the Conservatives will gain the seats that the Royton Local Group held on Planning Committee, Licensing Committee and the Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board. Reform UK will have seats on the Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board, the Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Board, the Commons Registration Committee, the Charitable Trust Committee and the Appeals Committee.

1.1 Political Groups

Council is asked to note that the composition of the political groups, as previously notified under Regulation 8 (1) of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, is: -

(i)	The Labour Group	27	Members
(ii)	The Liberal Democrat Group	9	Members
(iii)	The Oldham Group	9	Members
(iv)	Conservative Group	6	Members
(v)	Reform UK	3	Members
(vi)	Failsworth Independent Party	2	Members
(vii)	Royton Independents	2	Members
(viii)	The Independent Group	2	Members

- The Labour Group comprises: Councillors Shah (Leader), Taylor, Mohon Ali, Aslam, Bashforth, Brownridge, Charters, Chauhan, Cosgrove, Davis, Dean, Goodwin, Harrison, A. Hussain, F. Hussain, J. Hussain, S. Hussain, Iqbal, Islam, Jabbar, Malik, McLaren, Moores, Mushtaq, Nasheen, Rustidge and Shuttleworth.
- The Liberal Democrat Group comprises: Councillors Sykes (Leader), Al-Hamdani, Bishop, Hamblett, Harkness, Kenyon, Marland, Murphy and Williamson.
- The Oldham Group comprises: Councillors Ghafoor (Leader), Akhtar, Zaheer Ali, Azad, Chowhan, Ibrahim, Kouser, Sheldon and Wahid
- The Conservative Group comprises: Councillors Woodvine (Leader), Adams, Arnott, Byrne, Lancaster and Sharp.
- The Reform UK Group comprises: Councillors Quigg (Leader), Ball and Wilkinson.

- f. The Failsworth Independent Party comprises: Councillors Hobin (Leader) and Hindle.
- g. The Royton Independents comprises; Councillors Hurley (Leader) and Hughes.
- h. The Independent Group comprises Councillors Hince (Leader) and Navesey

1.2 Political Balance

There are four statutory principles of political balance which have to be applied in filling appointments to Committees. These are contained in S15(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

The principles have to be applied in priority order as follows:-

- (i) That not all seats on the body are allocated to the same political group.
- (ii) 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 are a majority of the Authority's membership.
- (iii) Subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant 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; and,
- (iv) Subject to paragraphs (i) to (iii) above, that the number of seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the same number of all seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Authority.

The political group sizes as a percentage of the total membership of the Council are:-

Labour Group	$27/60 \times 100 = 45\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 45\% = 56.25$	56 seats
Liberal Democrat Group	$9/60 \times 100 = 15\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 15\% = 18.75$	19 seats
Oldham Group	$9/60 \times 100 = 15\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 15\% = 18.75$	19 seats
Conservative Group	$6/60 \times 100 = 10.00\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 10.00\% = 12.5$	12 seats
Reform UK	$3/60 \times 100 = 5\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 5\% = 6.25$	6 seats
Failsworth Independent Party	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 Seats
The Independent Group	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 seats
Royton Local Group	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 seats
Royton Independents	$2/60 \times 100 = 3.33\%$	$125 \text{ seats} \times 3.33\% = 4.16$	4 seats

1.3 The application of these percentages to the number of seats on individual Committees gives the following allocation of seats: -

COMMITTEE SIZE	Labour (L)	Liberal Democrat (LD)	Oldham Group (OG)	Conservatives (C)	Reform UK	Failsworth Independents (FIP)	The Independent Group (TIG)	Royton Independents (RI)
16	7.20	2.40	2.40	1.60	0.80	0.53	0.53	0.53
15	6.75	2.25	2.25	1.50	0.75	0.50	0.50	0.50
14	6.30	2.10	2.10	1.40	0.70	0.46	0.46	0.46
13	5.85	1.95	1.95	1.30	0.65	0.43	0.43	0.43
12	5.40	1.80	1.80	1.20	0.60	0.39	0.39	0.39
11	4.95	1.65	1.65	1.10	0.55	0.36	0.36	0.36
10	4.50	1.50	1.50	1.00	0.50	0.33	0.33	0.33
9	4.05	1.35	1.35	0.90	0.45	0.29	0.29	0.29
8	3.60	1.20	1.20	0.80	0.40	0.26	0.26	0.26
7	3.15	1.05	1.05	0.70	0.35	0.23	0.23	0.23
6	2.70	0.90	0.90	0.60	0.30	0.19	0.19	0.19
5	2.25	0.75	0.75	0.50	0.25	0.16	0.16	0.16
4	1.80	0.60	0.60	0.40	0.20	0.13	0.13	0.13
3	1.35	0.45	0.45	0.30	0.15	0.10	0.10	0.10

1.4 Under the political balance rules after these percentages have been applied to the total number of seats on Committees of the Council any remaining seats must be allocated to members who are not Members of any political group. Applying political balance as detailed above, the allocation of seats, to the current committee structure, would be as follows:-

Committee	Seats	L	LD	OG	C	RUK	FIP	TIG	RI
Planning	16	7	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
Licensing	15	7	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Children and Young People Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	0
Audit Committee	9	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	0

Employment Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Appointments Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Commons Registration	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Charitable Trust Committee	6	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Standards Committee	7	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Highway Regulation Committee (formerly TRO Panel)	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Appeals Committee	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	125	56	20	20	10	2	2	2	2

The above calculation leaves 11 committee places to be allocated.

1.5 Adjustment of Seats

In accordance with the rules of political balance, so far as practicable, the number of seats must be allocated to accord with the rules above. It is therefore proposed that the number of seats on the various Committees for the remainder of the 2025/26 Municipal Year be fixed as follows:-

Committee	Seats	L	LD	OG	C	RU K	FI P	TI G	RI
Planning	16	7	2	2	2	0	1	1	1
Licensing	15	7	2	2	2	0	1	1	0
Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	1	0	0	0
Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board	11	5	2	2	1	0	0	0	1
Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board	11	5	1	2	2	0	0	0	1
Children and Young People Scrutiny Board	11	5	1	1	2	1	1	0	0
Audit	9	4	2	2	0	1	0	0	0
Employment Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Commons Registration	4	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Appointments Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Charitable Trustee Committee	6	3	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Standards Committee	7	3	1	1	1	0	1	0	0

Highways Regulation Committee (formerly TRO)	5	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Appeals Committee	5	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Total	125	56	19	19	13	6	4	4	4

- a. The Health and Well Being Board is not included in the calculation above. Although the Committee is appointed by Council, the Local Authority (Public Health and Well Being Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 provide for the disapplication of Section 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989
- b. Annual Council on 21st May 2025 appointed a District Lead for each District Area and 2 Deputy District Leads for North and East District.
- c. It was previously agreed that the standards sub-committee, dealing with assessments or hearings will consist of 5 members with 2 Members from the Labour Group and one each from the Liberal Democrat Group, Conservative Group and the Oldham Group who have seats on the Standards Committee.

- 1.6 Substitutes are to be appointed by the political groups in accordance with the Substitute Scheme contained in the Constitution. Substitutes for Overview and Scrutiny Boards may be nominated up to a maximum of the number of Members of that Group serving on the Board. Substitutes are not permitted for Licensing. For the Planning Committee, up to 16 substitutes are to be nominated in accordance with the political balance of each Committee. Council is also asked to appoint substitutes to the Highways Regulation Committee, the Audit Committee and to the four Overview and Scrutiny Boards.
- 1.7 Council is asked to note the revised political composition of the Committees; to determine the allocation of seats to political groups; and to make the appointments to fill the seats in accordance with Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations.

2 Options/Alternatives

- 2.1 To approve the report.
Not to approve the report

3 Preferred Option

- 3.1 To approve the report.

4 Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant officers and Councillors.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 n/a

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications.

7	Equality Impact – including implications for Children and Young Persons
7.1	N/A
8	Key Decision
8.1	No
9	Key Decision Reference
9.1	N/A
10	Background Papers The following is a list of background papers on which this report is based in accordance with the requirements of Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. It does include documents which would disclose exempt or confidential information as defined by the Act: Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Contact: Peter Thompson – peter.thompson@oldham.gov.uk , or, JR Clynes Building, Cultural Quarter, Greaves Street, Oldham, OL1 1AT
11.	Appendices None