Report to COUNCIL

Review of Political Balance on Committees

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Reason for Decision
To enable the Council to note changes to the political composition of the Council owing from the formation of the Independent Alliance, the resignation of two Councillors and the outcome of the Failsworth West by-election, and to approve any consequential changes to political balance and the allocation of seats on committees in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

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 2026/27 municipal year. The effect, in terms of committee places, is that there will be a change in membership on the Licensing Committee, Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board, Children and Young People Scrutiny Board, Audit Committee, Employment Committee and Audit Committee.

Recommendations

1. That the composition of the political groups as shown in paragraph 1.1 be noted.

2. That the number of seats on the various Committees as detailed in paragraph 1.4 be noted.

3. That Council confirms the allocation of seats to the political groups in accordance with Sections 15 and 16 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as far as practicable.

4. That any outstanding appointments or changes be delegated to the Chief Executive in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group.

5. That Council notes that a further political balance report will be submitted to the Council meeting in December, following the by-election in Royton North.

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.

Since the last ordinary meeting of the Council on 16th September, the Chief Executive has received notification of the formation of a new political group, the Independent Alliance, in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 and the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The two members are Councillors Hobin (Leader of the Group) and Navesey (Deputy Leader).

There is also one vacancy on the Council. A vacant council seat is not occupied by a member and therefore does not count towards the representation of any political group pending the vacancy being filled.

The membership of groups has also changed due to the resignations of Councillors Quigg and Wilkinson (Reform UK) and the election of Councillor Baddeley (Reform UK) in November 2026.

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 – 18 Members
(ii) The Reform UK Group – 15 Members
(iii) The Oldham Group – 10 Members
(iv) The Liberal Democrat Group – 6 Members
(v) The Conservative Group – 4 Members
(vi) Royton Independents – 2 Members
(vii) The Independent Alliance – 2 Members
(viii) Two Independent Members

a. The Labour group comprises: Councillors Mohon Ali, Aslam, Brownridge, Charters, Chauhan, Harrison, F. Hussain, J. Hussain, Sajed Hussain, Iqbal, Islam, Jabbar, Moores, Nasheen, Rustidge, Shah, Shuttleworth and Taylor.
b. The Reform UK Group comprises: Councillors Baddeley, Ball, Barnes, Brooks, Eyre, Ford, Hanlon, Jackson, Klonowski, Pinder, Robinson, Ruthven, Tarbuck, Taylor and Williams.
c. The Oldham Group comprises: Councillors Akhtar, Zaheer Ali, Azad, Chowhan, Ghafoor, Ibrahim, Shabir Hussain, Kouser, Shah Arstan and Sheldon.
d. The Liberal Democrat Group comprises: Councillors Al-Hamdani, Bishop, Harkness, Kenyon, Murphy and Williamson.
e. The Conservative Group comprises: Councillors Arnott, Byrne, Sharp and Woodvine.
f. The Royton Independents comprises; Councillors Hughes and Hurley.
g. The Independent Alliance comprises: Councillors Hobin and Navesey.

h. Councillors Hince and Taleb are independent members not aligned to a political group.

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	18/59 x 100 = 30.51%	121 seats x 30.51% = 36.92	**37 seats**
Reform UK	15/59 x 100 = 25.42%	121 seats x 25.42% = 30.76	**31 seats**
Oldham Group	10/59 x 100 = 16.95%	121 seats x 16.95= 20.51	**21 seats**
Liberal Democrat Group	6/59 x 100 = 10.17%	121 seats x 10.17% = 12.31	**12 seats**
Conservative Group	4/59 x 100 = 6.78%	121 seats x 6.78% = 8.20	**8 seats**
Royton Independents	2/59 x 100 = 3.39%	121 seats x 3.39% = 4.10	**4 seats**
The Independent Alliance	2/59 x 100 = 3.39%	121 seats x 3.39% = 4.10	**4 seats**

There are two Independent Members not within a Group. Unallocated seats will be offered to them

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

Committee Size	Labour (L)	Reform UK (RUK)	Oldham Group (OG)	Liberal Democrats (LD)	Conservatives (C)	Royton Independents (RI)	Independent Alliance
16	4.88	4.07	2.71	1.63	1.08	0.54	0.54
15	4.58	3.81	2.54	1.53	1.02	0.51	0.51

14	4.27	3.56	2.37	1.42	0.95	0.47	0.47
13	3.97	3.31	2.20	1.32	0.88	0.44	0.44
12	3.66	3.05	2.03	1.22	0.81	0.41	0.41
11	3.36	2.80	1.86	1.12	0.75	0.37	0.37
10	3.05	2.54	1.69	1.02	0.68	0.34	0.34
9	2.75	2.29	1.53	0.92	0.61	0.31	0.31
8	2.44	2.03	1.36	0.81	0.54	0.27	0.27
7	2.14	1.78	1.19	0.71	0.47	0.24	0.24
6	1.83	1.53	1.02	0.61	0.41	0.20	0.20
5	1.53	1.27	0.85	0.51	0.34	0.17	0.17
4	1.22	1.02	0.68	0.41	0.27	0.14	0.14
3	0.92	0.76	0.51	0.31	0.20	0.10	0.10

1.3 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**	**RUK**	**OG**	**LD**	**C**	**RI**	**Ind Alliance**	**IND**
Licensing	15	5	4	3	2	1	1	1	0
Planning	11	3	3	2	1	1	0	0	0
Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board	11	3	3	2	1	1	0	0	0
Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board	11	3	3	2	1	1	0	0	0
Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board	11	3	3	2	1	1	0	0	0
Children and Young People Scrutiny Board	11	3	3	2	1	1	0	0	0
Audit Committee	9	3	2	2	1	1	0	0	0
Employment Committee	7	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Appointments Committee	7	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Commons Registration	5	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Highway Regulation Committee	5	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Charitable Trust Committee	6	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Standards Committee	7	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0

Appeals Committee	5	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Total	**121**	**37**	**32**	**22**	**15**	**7**	**1**	**1**	**0**

The above total is 115 which leaves 6 committee places to be allocated

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 2026/27 Municipal Year be fixed as follows, noting that a further report will be submitted to the Council in December following the by-election in Royton North.

Committee	**Seats**	**L**	**R UK**	**OG**	**LD**	**C**	**RI**	**Ind Alliance**	**IND**
Licensing	15	5	4	3	1	0	0	1	1
Planning	11	3	3	2	1	1	1	0	0
Place, Economic Growth and Environment Scrutiny Board	11	4	3	2	1	1	0	0	0
Governance, Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board	11	4	3	2	1	1	0	0	0
Adults Social Care and Health Scrutiny Board	11	3	3	2	1	0	1	1	0
Children and Young People Scrutiny Board	11	3	2	2	1	1	0	1	1
Audit	9	3	2	1	1	1	1	0	0
Employment Committee	7	3	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Commons Registration	5	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
Highway Regulation Committee	5	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
Appointments Committee	7	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0
Charitable Trustee Committee	6	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
Standards Committee	7	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	0
Appeals Committee	5	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1
Total	**121**	**37**	**31**	**21**	**12**	**8**	**4**	**4**	**4**

1.5 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 and Planning Committee 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. Council is also asked to appoint substitutes to the Audit Committee. For clarity therefore, it is recommended that substitutes are permissible for the Planning Committee, all Overview and Scrutiny boards, Audit Committee, Appointments Committee, Commons Registration Panel and the Highway Regulation Committee, and the Substitute Scheme be clarified accordingly.

1.6 Council is asked to review the 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 and the committee's composition as detailed in the report.

4 Consultation

4.1 Consultation has taken place with political group leaders.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 n/a

6 Legal Implications

6.1 n/a

7 Equality Impact – including implications for Children and Young People

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.