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| REPORT TO: | | Council | |
| DATE: | | 27 February 2025 | |
| PORTFOLIO: | | Councillor Munsif Dad BEM JP - Leader of the Council | |
| REPORT AUTHOR: | | Julian Joinson, Member Services Manager | |
| TITLE OF REPORT: | | Review of Allocation of Seats to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees | |
| EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A) | No | Not applicable | |
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| KEY DECISION: | No | If yes, date of publication: | N/A |

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To consider the outcome of a review of allocation of seats to political groups, to approve any consequential amendments to committee sizes and any changes proposed to the appointment of individual councillors to serve on those committees

2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 To note the outcome of a review of allocation of seats to political groups.
- 2.2 To approve the political composition of committees and sub-committees of the Council, as set out in Paragraph 4.5 of this report, and the consequential amendments required to committee sizes at Appendix 1 of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council's Constitution.
- 2.3 To approve the changes to the membership of any committees and sub-committees, as may be submitted before, or at, the Council meeting by the political group leaders, and where any such details are not available at the meeting, the Chief Executive be authorised to approve the updated membership in consultation with the relevant group leader.

3. Review of Allocation of Seats

- 3.1 In accordance with The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, the Council is required to review the allocation of seats to political groups under s.15 Local Government and Housing Act 1989, in certain prescribed circumstances. This includes following the service of a notice to the proper officer under Regulation 9 by a member wishing to join a political group on the Council and the acceptance of that application by the group concerned, accompanied by a further notice under Regulation 17(c) requesting a review.
- 3.2 Following the recent by-election in the Baxenden ward, the relevant notices have been received in connection Councillor Heap joining the Conservative Group and the request for a review of the allocation of seats.
- 3.3 The review has resulted in minor adjustments being proposed to the size of committees to maintain to the overall political balance and consequential amendments to the councillors appointed to serve on the various committees affected.

4. Allocation of Seats

- 4.1 The total seats available across the Council should now, in so far as is practicable, be divided between the political parties in the following ratio: 63.6% (Labour and Co-operative) 36.4% (Conservative). The same ratio should be applied, in so far as is practicable, to the allocation of seats on each individual committee/sub-committee. Members may recall that at the Council's Annual Meeting on 23rd May 2024, it was agreed to gift a small number of seats to the Green and Independent members on the larger committees, as this would not materially affect the overall political balance. It is not proposed to alter this arrangement
- 4.2 The basic calculation to allocate seats to committees of various sizes remains as was indicated at the Annual Meeting and is shown in Table 1 below. At that time the Council noted that, some adjustment to the ratios shown might be required in the final allocation of seats across the Council to take into account the following principles as required by the legislation:
- (a) Not all seats to go to the same group;
 - (b) If a Group has a majority on the Council, it should receive a majority of seats on each committee;
 - (c) Total number of seats across all bodies must be proportionate (subject to (a) and (b));
 - (d) Seats on each body must be proportionate (subject to (a) to (c)).

Table 1

| No of seats on Committee | Lab | Cons | Green | Indpt | Proposed Ratio |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 2 members | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1:1:0:0 |

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|------------|----|---|---|---|----------|
| 3 members | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2:1:0:0 |
| 4 members | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3:1:0:0 |
| 5 members | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3:2:0:0 |
| 6 members | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4:2:0:0 |
| 7 members | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5:2:0:0 |
| 8 members | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5:3:0:0 |
| 9 members | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 6:3:0:0 |
| 10 members | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7:3:0:0 |
| 11 members | 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 7:4:0:0 |
| 12 members | 8 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 8:4:0:0 |
| 13 members | 9 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 8:4:0:1* |
| 14 members | 9 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 8:5:1:0* |
| 15 members | 10 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 10:5:0:0 |

* NB. Adjusted to provide for 1 Green and 1 Independent seat

4.3 Following the review, there are two amendments proposed to the size of committees/sub-committees since the Annual Meeting in 2024, in respect of the following Committees:

- Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee (increase from 7 to 8 seats, providing an additional Conservative seat)
- Communities and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee (increase from 7 to 8 seats, providing an additional Conservative seat)

4.4 The proposals will increase the total number of available seats across all committees and sub-committees from 86 to 88.

4.5 A summary of the updated committee sizes is set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2

| Committee | Total No. of Seats | No. of seats by political group (Labour & Co-operative : Conservative : Green : Independent) |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Audit Committee | 6 | 4:2:0:0 |
| Communities & Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee | 8 (proposed increase from 7 to 8) | 5:3:0:0 |
| Judicial Committee (Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Licensing) | 6 | 4:2:0:0 |
| Licensing Committee | 14 | 8:5:1:0 |
| Licensing Sub-Committee | 3 | 3 from Licensing Committee, one of whom must be the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Licensing Committee (2:1:0:0 where practicable) |
| Management Review Committee | 5 | 3:2:0:0 Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, plus an additional member of the Cabinet, and Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition Group |
| Planning Committee | 13 | 8:4:0:1 |
| Planning (Trees) Sub-Committee | 5 | 3:2:0:0 (drawn from the parent committee above) |
| Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee | 8 (proposed increase from 7 to 8) | 5:3:0:0 |
| Special Overview & Scrutiny Committee | 7 | 5:2:0:0 |
| Standards Committee | 8 | 5:3:0:0 |
| Standards Committee – Hearing Sub-Committee | 5 | For matters relating to Hyndburn Borough Council: 5 members plus |

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|--------------|----|--|
| | | 1 non-voting independent person For matters relating to Altham Parish Council: 5 members, plus 1 independent person and 1 parish representative (3:2:0:0) where practicable) |
| Total | 88 | 55 – Lab & Co-op (62.5%) 31 – Cons (35.2%) 1 – Green (1.1%) 1 – Indpt (1.1%) |

5. **Appointment of Councillors to Individual Committees**

- 5.1 Nominations have been sought from the Conservative Group for the committee vacancies created by the review. Any consequential changes to the appointments to other committees/sub-committees may be dealt with at the same time.
- 5.2 Where no nominations have been submitted in advance and these are not subsequently provided at the Council meeting, a delegated authority to the Chief Executive to make the appointments in consultation with the relevant political group leader may be required.

6. **Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection**

- 6.1 There are no alternative options recommended for consideration.

7. **Consultations**

- 7.1 The leaders of the two political groups on the Council have been consulted on these proposals

8. **Implications**

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| Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council) | There are no financial implications to the proposals |
| Legal and human rights implications | Not applicable |
| Assessment of risk | Not applicable |

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| Equality and diversity implications <i>A Customer First Analysis should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i> | There are no equality and diversity implications regarding the proposals |
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**9. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:
List of Background Papers**

- 9.1 Notice of a request to join a political group
- 9.2 Notice of a request for a review of the allocation of seats

10. Freedom of Information

- 10.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.