

**Eden District Council
Council**

30 July 2020

Allocation of Seats

Report from:	Assistant Director Governance
Wards:	All Wards
OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To make appointments to the Committees for the remainder of the 2020/2021 municipal year.

2 Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- 1 The appointment of Members to Committees as set out in Appendix 1 be approved; and
- 2 The Green Group and the Labour Group continue a reciprocal arrangement where the nominated Members can act as Standing Deputies.

3 Report Details

- 3.1 The seats on the Council's committees should be allocated in accordance with the principles set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to the political groups amongst the Members of the Council so far as it is reasonably practicable. The principles seek to achieve proportionality in the allocation of seats. The principles, which are paraphrased, are in order of priority:
- a) All the seats on the Committee cannot be allocated to the same political group;
 - b) the majority of the seats allocated on any body, including each Committee, are allocated to the group, if any, which has a majority on the Council;
 - c) the number of seats on the total of all Committees allocated to each political group bear the same proportion as the proportion the members of that group has to the members of the entire Council; and
 - d) the number of seats on each Committee allocated to each group bear the same proportion as the proportion the members of that group has to the total members of the entire Council.

The legislation provides that such determinations are to be achieved 'as far as reasonably practicable'.

- 3.2 The current Council Membership is as follows:

Conservative Group	14
Independent Group	9
Liberal Democrat Group	11
Labour Group	2
Green Group	2
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For the purposes of calculating political proportionality, a political group should consist of two or more members. This means that the Labour and Green Group, with two members each, are considered a political group in terms of calculating the allocation of seats. For the purposes of political balance, the Executive does not count as seats to be allocated.

- 3.3 At the Annual Council meeting of 28 May 2020, the following allocation of seats was approved:

Group	Proposed number of seats
Conservative Group	21
Liberal Democrat Group	18
Independent Group	14
Labour	3.5
Green	3.5
Total	60

- 3.4 This ensures that political balance is met 'as far as reasonably practicable' allowing fair representation for all parties.
- 3.5 At the Annual Council Meeting on 28 May 2020, it was proposed and approved that once again, the Members of the Green Group and the Labour Group adopt a reciprocal arrangement whereby nominated Members can act as Standing Deputies for either group. This accommodates the practical limitations associated with having Group comprising two Members, where one Members sits on the Executive.
- 3.6 The reason for bringing this report to Council is to address a request by the Conservative Group to alter their membership of the Budget Planning Committee, and to correct minor typographical issues in the previous appendix which went to Annual Council on 28 May 2020.

4 Policy Framework

- 4.1 The Council has four corporate priorities which are:
- Sustainable;
 - Healthy, safe and secure;
 - Connected; and

- Creative

4.2 This report meets sustainable corporate priority

5 Consultation

5.1 No consultation has taken place regarding this report.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial and Resources

6.1.1 Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the Council's stated priorities, as set out in its Council Plan 2019-2023 as agreed at Council on 7 November 2019.

6.1.2 There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 places a duty on the Council to review the representation of political groups on its committees where the members of the Council are split into different political groups.

6.2.2 The Act requires that the Council should allocate seats on committees in accordance with the principles set out in paragraph 3.1 of this report.

6.2.3 Once political group allocations have been determined, it is the duty of the Council to exercise the power to make appointments to committees to vie effect to the nominations of the political groups concerned. These political balance requirements also apply to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

6.3 Human Resources

6.3.1 There are no human resources implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6.4 Statutory Considerations

Consideration:	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	None arising from this report
Health, Social Environmental and Economic Impact	None arising from this report
Crime and Disorder	None arising from this report
Children and Safeguarding	None arising from this report

6.5 Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
There is a need to allocate the appointment of Members to seats, in	Failure to allocate seats in line with these principles would be in breach of statutory	Report G17/20, which was heard at Annual Council on 28 May 2020, set out the

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
so far as it is reasonably practicable, with regard to the statutory principles set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.	requirements and may result in error or legal challenge.	calculations used in relation to the principles of proportionality following the reduction in the number of seats caused by the merging of the three Scrutiny Committees into one.

7 Other Options Considered

7.1 No other options have been considered.

8 Reasons for the Decision/Recommendation

8.1 To comply with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and associated regulations in relation to the appointment of members to Committees in accordance with the express wishes of the political groups to which seats have been allocated.

Background Papers: **G17/20 Allocation of Seats on Council (Council meeting, 28 May 2020)**

Appendices: **Appendix 1 – Allocation of Seats 2020/21**

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