

**Teignbridge District Council
Full Council
25 February 2025
Part i**

**Committee Appointments and Political Balance – Local
Government and Housing Act 1989**

Purpose of Report

To determine the size of the Overview & Scrutiny and Planning Committee.
To seek approval of the seat allocations detailed at paragraph 3.1 with effect from 25 February 2025.

Recommendation(s)

The Council is recommended to:

1. Approve the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Planning Committee to be reduced in size to 13 and 11 respectively.
2. Approve the seat allocations as set out at paragraph 3.1.2
3. Require Group Leaders to advise the Democratic Services Team of their group membership to Committees by 4pm 28 February 2025, and of any changes during the current administration within 24 hours of the change occurring.
4. Give effect to the appointment of individual members as proposed by the Group Leaders
5. Require that Overview and Scrutiny training is mandatory for all members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
6. Make the changes as necessary to the Constitution to reflect the approved recommendations

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.
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Legal Implications

The purpose of this report is to comply with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, which requires the allocation of seats on committees in accordance with the level of representation of political groups on the Council as a whole.

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. A council is deemed to be split into different political groups where there is at least one such group on the Council. There is a particular duty to conduct this review at the Annual General Meeting or as soon as practicable after that.

For political balance, a group is required to have at least two members in order to be formally constituted as a political group.

Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out how committees must be constituted when the Council is divided into one or more political groups. The Council must give effect, as far as reasonably practicable, to the following four principles in constituting its committees or sub-committees:

- (a) that not all of the seats on any committee are allocated to the same political group;
- (b) that if a political group has a majority on the Council, it must have a majority of seats on all committees;
- (c) that, subject to (a) and (b) above, the number of seats allocated to a political group across all the committees must reflect their proportion of the authority's membership; and
- (d) that, subject to (a) to (c) above, the number of seats allocated to a political group on each committee is as far as possible in proportion to the group's membership of the authority.

The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (as amended) make provision for securing the political balance on councils and their committees and for determining the voting rights of members of certain committees

Once the allocations have been agreed, the appointment of individual members must be given effect in accordance with the wishes of the relevant Group as expressed through the Group's Leader / Deputy Leader.

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Risk Assessment

Failure to allocate seats in line with the statutory principles set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 would be in breach of statutory requirements and may result in legal challenge.

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Environmental/ Climate Change Implications

There are no Environmental/Climate Change Implications arising out of this report.

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Appendices/Background Papers

Local Government (Committees and Political Groups_ Regulations 1990
Local Government and Housing Act 1990

1. Introduction

The Leader has asked that this report includes tables showing the seat allocations for both the current committee sizes and with a reduction in the size of the Overview & Scrutiny to 13 members and Planning Committees to 11 members.

The background to this request comes from a view that the decision making processes of the Council will be enhanced by reducing the size of the committees and developing the skills and knowledge members. A reduction in the size of committees would be accompanied with O & S and Planning members receiving additional training and development specific to the relevant committee. It also proposed that the Constitution be amended to make training mandatory for O & S.

The proposals follow recommendations from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny and the Planning Advisory Service regarding the size of O & S and Planning Committees.

The membership of the political groups on the Council is as follows:-.

Liberal Democrat Group	25 Seats
Conservative Group	10 Seats
Independent Group	8 Seats
The Independents Group	3 Seats
1 Vacancy (no seat)	
Total Seats to be allocated	46 Seats

The various groups comprise the following Members:

Liberal Democrat Councillors (25)
Buscombe
Cox
Dawson
Farrand-Rogers

Foden
Goodman-Bradbury
Hayes
Henderson
Hook
Jackman
James
Keeling
Major
Morgan
Nutley
Nuttall
Palethorpe
C Parker
Parrott
Rollason
Sanders
Swain
G Taylor
Williams
Wrigley
Conservative Councillors (10)
Atkins
Bullivant
Hall
Lake
Peart
Purser
Rogers
Smith
Thorne
Webster
Independent Group Councillors (8)
Bradford
Clarance
Gearon
P Parker
Radford
Ryan
Steemson
J Taylor
The Independents Group Councillors (3)
Daws
Mullone
MacGregor

2. Committees

2.1 The committees which are subject to political balance requirements currently comprise:

Committee	No. of Members on the committee
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	20
Planning Committee	17
Licensing & Regulatory Committee	11
Audit Scrutiny Committee	8
Standards Committee	6
Strata Scrutiny	3

2.2

Reduced O&S and Planning Committee size

Committee	No. of Members on the committee
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13
Planning Committee	11
Licensing & Regulatory Committee	11
Audit Scrutiny Committee	8
Standards Committee	6
Strata Scrutiny	3

2.3 The committees which are not subject to political balance requirements:

Name of body other than ordinary committee	No. of Members on the committee
Procedures Committee	<p>Membership:</p> <p>(a) The Chair of Council (who will Chair the Committee);</p> <p>(b) All Group Leaders;</p> <p>(c) Two additional members from each Group (who are appointed at Annual Council) provided that the Group comprises 10% or more of the Council full membership</p>

3. Allocations of seats and nominations

3.1 Allocations to committees subject to political balance requirements will be:-

3.1.1 Based on current size for Overview & Scrutiny and Planning

Committee	Total Seats	Lib Dems	Cons	Independent Group	The Independents Group
Overview & Scrutiny	20	12	4	3	1
Planning	17	9	4	3	1
Licensing & Regulatory	11	6	2	2	1
Audit Scrutiny Committee	8	4	2	1	1
Standards	6	4	1	1	0
Strata Scrutiny	3	1	1	1	0
Total	65	36	14	11	4

3.1.2

Reduced Overview & Scrutiny and Planning Committee size

Committee	Total Seats	Lib Dems	Cons	Independent Group	The Independents Group
Overview & Scrutiny	13	7	3	2	1
Planning	11	6	2	2	1
Licensing & Regulatory	11	6	2	2	1
Standards	6	4	1	1	0
Audit Scrutiny Committee	8	5	2	1	0
Strata Scrutiny	3	1	1	1	0
Total	52	29	11	9	3

- 3.3** Each political group Leader has been asked to provide their group's allocations for the committees to the Democratic Services Team by 4pm 28 February 2025