

Teignbridge District Council
Full Council
Tuesday 29th July 2025
Part I

Political Balance and Committee Seat Allocation

Purpose of Report

In accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, to seek approval of the seat allocations detailed in Appendix 1 with effect from 29th July 2025.

Recommendation(s)

The Council RESOLVES to:

1. Approve the Committee seat allocations as set out in the Appendix.
2. Give effect to the appointment of individual members as proposed by the Group Leaders.
3. Asks Group Leaders to advise the Democratic Services Team Leader of any changes required within 24 hours of the change occurring.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Director of Corporate Services

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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.

As to not predetermine the decisions of the Council, the report's appendix includes explanations if the Council agrees or does not agree in the preceding item to change the Constitution regarding Audit Scrutiny, Procedures and Standards.

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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 and Housing Act 1989

Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990

1. Introduction/background

Following the vacation of office by failure to attend meetings by a former Councillor, it has necessitated the need to review the allocation of seats to ensure the Council remains compliant with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

As of 15th July 2025, the current political composition of the Council is as follows:

Liberal Democrats	Independent Group	Conservatives	Independent (no group)	Reform UK (no group)	Vacant
25	10	9	1	1	1
53.19%	21.28%	19.15%	2.13%	2.13%	2.13%

The various groups comprise the following Members:

Liberal Democrat Councillors (25)	Independent Group Councillors (10)	Conservative Councillors (9)	Independent – no group (1)	Reform UK – no group (1)	Vacant (1)
Buscombe	Bradford	Atkins	Steemson	Horner	
Cox	Clarance	Bullivant			
Dawson	Gearon	Hall			
Farrand-Rogers	P Parker	Peart			
Foden	Radford	Purser			
Goodman-Bradbury	Ryan	Rogers			
Hayes	J Taylor	Smith			
Henderson	Daws	Thorne			
Hook	Mullone	Webster			
Jackman	MacGregor				
James					
Keeling					
Major					
Morgan					
Nutley					
Nuttall					
Palethorpe					
C Parker					
Parrott					
Rollason					
Sanders					
Swain					
G Taylor					
Williams					
Wrigley					

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

Committee	No. of Members
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13
Planning Committee	11
Licensing & Regulatory Committee	11
Audit (Scrutiny) Committee	8
Standards (Governance) Committee	6

The committees which are not subject to political balance requirements currently comprise:

Committee / Working Group	No. of Members
Appointments and Remuneration Committee	4
Strata Scrutiny	3
Strata Executive	1
Procedures Committee	10
Constitution Review Working Group	9

The numbers of seats allocate to each group for politically balanced committees is as follows:

Committee	No. of Members on the committee	Liberal Democrats	Independent Group	Conservatives	Unallocated Seats
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13	7	3	2	1
Planning Committee	11	6	2	2	1
Licensing & Regulatory Committee	11	6	2	2	1
Audit (Scrutiny) Committee	8	5	2	1	
Standards (Governance) Committee	6	4	1	1	
Total	49	28	10	8	3
%		57.14%	20.4%	16%	6.25%

Appendix - Committee Seat Allocations

Politically balanced Committees:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (13 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (7 Seats)	Independent Group (3 Seats)	Conservative (2 Seats)	Unallocated Seat (1)
1. Cllr Cox	1. Cllr J Taylor	1. Cllr Bullivant (Chair)	1. Cllr Steemson
2. Cllr Hayes	2. Cllr Macgregor	2. Cllr Thorne (Vice-Chair)	
3. Cllr James	3. Cllr Ryan		
4. Cllr Major			
5. Cllr C Parker			
6. Cllr Rollason			
7. Cllr Swain			

Planning Committee (11 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (6 Seats)	Independent Group (2 Seats)	Conservative (2 Seats)	Unallocated Seat (1)
1. Cllr Cox (Vice Chair)	1. Cllr Bradford	1. Cllr Hall	1. Cllr Horner
2. Cllr Nutley	2. Cllr P Parker	2. Cllr Bullivant	
3. Cllr Nuttall			
4. Cllr Palethorpe			
5. Cllr Sanders (Chair)			
6. Cllr Williams			
Substitutes (up to 3 per Group)			
Cllr Hook	Cllr Clarence	Cllr Atkins	
Cllr Parrott	Cllr J Taylor		

Licensing and Regulatory Committee (11 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (6 Seats)	Independent Group (2 seats)	Conservative (2 Seats)	Unallocated Seat (1)
1. Cllr Dawson	1. Cllr Bradford	1. Cllr Peart	1. Cllr Horner
2. Cllr Foden	2. Cllr Gearon	2. Cllr Atkins	
3. Cllr Hayes (Chair)			
4. Cllr Henderson			
5. Cllr Jackman			
6. Cllr Rollason (Vice Chair)			

Audit (Scrutiny) (8 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (5 Seats)	Independent Group (2 Seats)	Conservative (1 Seat)	Independent - No Group
1. Cllr Morgan (Chair)	1. Cllr Ryan	1. Cllr Purser	1. Cllr Steemson (Vice Chair) (Liberal Democrat Place)
2. Cllr Jackman	2. Cllr Radford		
3. Cllr Nuttall			
4. Cllr Swain			
5. Place given to Cllr Steemson			
Independent Member (non-voting): Mr P Dodd			

N.B. If the Council approves the renaming of the Audit Scrutiny Committee in item 9, this Committee will be named the Audit Committee.

Standards (Governance) (6 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (4 Seats)	Independent Group (1 Seats)	Conservative (1 Seats)
1. Cllr Henderson (Vice Chair)	1. Cllr Clarence	1. Cllr Bullivant (Chair)
2. Cllr Palethorpe		
3. Cllr Nutley		
4. Cllr Nuttall		
Independent Persons (non-voting):		
1. Mr Jonathan Back		
2. Mrs Hazel Elliott		
3. Ms Sandra Genender		
4. Dr Geraldine Sharp		

N.B. If the Council approves the creation of a Governance Committee in item 9, the Procedures Committee will be merged into the Standards Committee to form the Governance Committee.

Committees not politically balanced:

Appointments and Remuneration Committee (4 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (2 Seats)	Independent Group (1 Seats)	Conservatives (1 Seats)
1. Leader of the Council – Cllr Keeling (Chair)	1. Group Leader – Cllr Clarence	1. Group Leader – Cllr Bullivant
2. Executive Member for Corporate Resources – Cllr Parrott		

Strata Scrutiny (3 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (1 Seat)	Independent Group (1 Seats)	Conservative (1 Seats)
1. Cllr Swain	1. Cllr Radford	1. Cllr Rogers

Strata Executive (1 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (1 Seat)	Independent Group (0 seats)	Conservatives (0 seats)
1. Cllr Palethorpe		

Procedures (10 Seats)

Liberal Democrats Group Leader plus two other members	Independent Group Group Leader plus two other members	Conservative Group Leader plus two other members
1. Cllr Keeling	1. Cllr Clarence	1. Cllr Bullivant
2. Cllr Palethorpe	2. Cllr J Taylor	2. Cllr Peart
3. Cllr Williams	3. Cllr Daws	3.Cllr Purser
Chaired by the Chair of the Council – Cllr Steemson		

N.B. If the Council approves the creation of a Governance Committee in item 9, the Procedures Committee will be merged into the Standards Committee to form the Governance Committee and Members will not be appointed to it.

Working Group not politically balanced:

Constitution Review Working Group (9 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (3 Seats)	Independent Group (3 seats)	Conservative (1 Seat)	Independent - No Group (1 seat)
1. Cllr Dawson	1. Cllr Clarence	1. Cllr Bullivant	1. Cllr Steemson
2. Cllr Palethorpe	2. Cllr Daws	2. Cllr Thorne	
3. Cllr Sanders	3. Cllr J Taylor		
Chaired externally by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CFGs).			