

Teignbridge District Council
Full Council
Thursday 23rd October 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 with effect from Thursday 23rd October 2025.

Recommendation(s)

The Council RESOLVES to:

1. Approve the Committee seat allocations as set out in the Appendix.
2. Asks Group Leaders to advise the Democratic Services Manager of any changes required to Committee Membership within 24 hours of the change occurring.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Gordon Bryant – Head of Financial Services and Audit

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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.

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.

Section 17 of the Act states that Full Council may waive the political balance rules for any committee(s) where the Council wishes to appoint an alternative number of members from political groups. In order for political balance to be waived no member must vote against this motion, an objection by a single member would make it necessary to apply political balance rules.

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.

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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

Appendix – Committee Seat Allocations

1. Introduction/background

Following the Kenn Valley By-election on 9th October 2025, there is a need to review the allocation of seats to ensure the Council remains compliant with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

As of 10th October 2025, the current political composition of the Council is as follows:

Liberal Democrats	Independent Group	Conservative	Independent (no group)	Reform UK (no group)
26	10	9	1	1
55.32%	21.28%	19.15%	2.13%	2.13%

The various groups comprise the following Members:

Liberal Democrat Councillors (26)	Independent Group Councillors (10)	Conservative Councillors (9)	Independent (no group) (1)	Reform UK (no group) (1)
Buscombe	Bradford	Atkins	Steemson	Horner
Cox	Clarance	Bullivant		
Dawson	Gearon	Hall		
Farrand-Rogers	P Parker	Peart		
Foden	Radford	Purser		
Goodman-Bradbury	Ryan	Rogers		
Henderson (Ind, aligned to Liberal Democrats)	J Taylor	M Smith		
Hayes	Daws	Thorne		
Hook	Mullone	Webster		
Jackman	MacGregor			
James				
Keeling				
Major				
Morgan				
Nutley				
Nuttall				
Palethorpe				
C Parker				
Parrott				
Rollason				
Sanders				
K Smith				
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 Committee	8
Governance Committee	6

The Committees and working groups which are not subject to political balance requirements currently comprise:

Committee / Working Group	No. of Members
Executive	9
Appointments and Remuneration Committee	4
Strata Scrutiny	3
Strata Executive	1
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 Seat(s)
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	13	7 (7.19)	3 (2.77)	2 (2.49)	1
Planning Committee	11	6 (6.09)	2 (2.34)	2 (2.11)	1
Licensing & Regulatory Committee	11	6 (6.09)	2 (2.34)	2 (2.11)	1
Audit Committee	8	5 (4.43)	2 (1.7)	1 (1.53)	
Governance Committee	6	4 (3.32)	1 (1.28)	1 (1.15)	
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 Committee (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 K Smith			
3. Cllr Swain			
5. Place given to Cllr Steemson			
Independent Member (non-voting): Mr P Dodd			

Governance Committee (6 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (4 Seats)	Independent Group (1 Seat)	Conservative (1 Seat)
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

Committees not politically balanced:

Executive (Leader, Deputy Leader and up to 8 others)

Liberal Democrats (9 seats)	Independent Group (0 seats)	Conservatives (0 seats)
1. Cllr Keeling (Leader)		
2. Cllr Palethorpe (Deputy Leader)		
3. Cllr Buscombe		
4. Cllr Hook		
5. Cllr Nutley		
6. Cllr Nuttall		
7. Cllr Parrott		
8. Cllr G Taylor		
9. Cllr Williams		

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		

Working Group not politically balanced:

Constitution Review Working Group (9 Seats)

Liberal Democrats (3 Seats)	Independent Group (3 seats)	Conservative (2 Seats)	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).			