



## ANNUAL COUNCIL – 18TH MAY 2017

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES & SECTION 151 OFFICER**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To carry out a review of political balance across the authority and the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with statute.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report gives the political balance of the authority following the local government elections in May 2017 and outlines the possible variations dependent on the grouping of Independent Members.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Council is under a statutory duty to review the political balance of the authority and to comply with relevant legislation regarding the governance arrangements for Local Authorities in Wales.
- 3.2 The recommended course of action contributes to the following Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2016:
- *A more equal Wales*

### 4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Under the Council's Rules of Procedure set out in the Constitution, the Council is required to appoint or re-appoint Committees at its Annual Meeting.
- 4.2 The legislation requires a council to review the political balance and apply the following principles to that review:-
- (a) Not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same political group;
  - (b) That the majority of seats on the body is allocated to a particular political group if the number of people belonging to that group represents a majority of the council's membership;

- (c) Subject to those earlier rules the number of seats on the ordinary committees of the council allocated to each group bear the same proportion to the total of all seats allocated as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

4.3 The Council has always applied the legislation to mean that so far as is practicable the allocation of seats is the same as the overall percentage that a party has of the total seats of the authority. However it is impossible to obtain a perfect percentage balance on each and every committee and there are therefore two principles:-

- (i) The majority group must have the majority on any committee;  
(ii) That the overall allocation of seats is as close as possible to the overall percentage that a party holds on the council.

4.4 The membership of the current political groupings has been calculated along with possible variations of Independent Members. There is already an Independents group of four; however one Independent Member has not yet indicated their intentions. Therefore the possible variations are as follows:-

**Variation 1**

| <b>Group</b> | <b>Membership</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Labour       | 50                | 68.5%             |
| Plaid Cymru  | 18                | 24.7%             |
| Independents | 4                 | 5.5%              |

**Variation 2**

| <b>Group</b> | <b>Membership</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Labour       | 50                | 68.5%             |
| Plaid Cymru  | 18                | 24.7%             |
| Independents | 5                 | 6.8%              |

4.5 A single Independent Member cannot form a group therefore a percentage of 1.4% would be applied and the individual Member only entitled to a seat on full Council.

4.6 Appendices 1 and 2 to this report sets out the political balance and allocation of seats for Committees calculated in accordance with the relevant guidance, for each of the variations listed in 4.4 above.

4.7 The number of seats on Committee's is listed as follows;

- Audit Committee – 12 Members
- Appeals Committee – 3 Members
- Appointments Committee – 8 Members
- Democratic Services Committee – 16 Members
- Licensing Committee – 15 Members
- Planning Committee – 20 Members (subject to changes detailed in Constitutional Matters Report)
- Education for Life Scrutiny Committee – 16 Members
- Health, Social Care and Well-Being Scrutiny - 16 Members
- Policy and Resources/Partnerships Scrutiny Committee – 16 Members
- Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee – 16 Members

## **5. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

- 5.1 This report contributes to the Well-being Goals as set out in Links to Strategy above. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that the importance of ensuring that representation on committees reflect the political balance of the local authority thereby involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals.

## **6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council is under a statutory duty to review the political balance of the authority and apply that balance to the allocation of seats on committees.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications which have not been included in this report.

## **8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no personnel implications which have not been included in this report.

## **9. CONSULTATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no consultations that have not been included in the report.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 That the Council considers the political balance as outlined in either Appendix 1 or 2 (as applicable) and approves the appropriate general allocation of seats to the Committees in accordance with the political balance.

## **11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 11.1 In order to comply with statutory requirements to keep the political balance of the authority under review and to allocate seats on committees in accordance with that balance.

## **12. STATUTORY POWER**

- 12.1 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and regulations made under the Act and Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

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### Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Copy of Political Balance 8th May 2017 – variation 1  
Appendix 2 Copy of Political Balance 8th May 2017 – variation 2