

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>18 JULY 2014</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Key Decision**

This is not an executive decision.

## **Wards Affected**

County-wide

## **Purpose**

To exercise the powers reserved to Council to approve the allocation of seats to political groups.

## **Recommendations**

**THAT:**

- a) **the allocation of seats on ordinary committees to political groups be made as indicated in appendix 1 (to be tabled);**
- b) **the seats on other bodies to which the allocation of seats to groups falls to be made by Council be as indicated in appendix 2 (to be tabled); and**
- c) **the suspension of the rules of proportionality, in respect of the Regulatory Sub-Committee, the River Lugg Internal Drainage Board and the Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee, be approved.**

## **Alternative Options**

- 1 To draw up a different set of committees of a different size; this is not recommended with only nine months of the term of this council remaining.

## Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 Council is required to review its political composition and how this is applied to appointments to committees and sub-committees of the council at each Annual Meeting of Council and at the first available meeting of Council should the membership of groups change for any reason.

## Key Considerations

- 3 Since the annual meeting of Council in May when the proportional allocation of seats was determined, one member of the Independent Group has chosen to be ungrouped and the by elections for the two vacant seats on the Council, Ledbury Ward and Leominster South Ward, will be held on 17 July. The outcome from these by elections and any impact on the proportionality of the council will be reported to Council at its meeting.
- 4 Council is under a duty to ensure membership of those committees covered by the relevant rules reflects the political composition of the council, as far as practicable, by allocating seats on the committees to the political groups in proportion to their numerical strength on the council, whilst also maintaining a similar proportional balance of overall seat numbers. Council must then accept nominations made by the groups for filling the seats allocated to them.
- 5 The current size of ordinary committees of council is shown in the table below, there are no proposals to amend this.

Committee	Seats
Audit and Governance Committee	10
Employment Panel	6
General Overview and Scrutiny Committee	14
Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee	14
Planning Committee	20
Regulatory Committee	10
Total Seats	74

- 6 It is not proposed to vary Council's decision in May 2014 to allocate certain seats on a different basis from that of political proportion. Council must take a *nem con vote*, where no member votes against the proposal, to permit this approach in respect of: the Regulatory Sub-Committee (which is itself drawn on an ad hoc basis from members of the politically proportionate Regulatory Committee), the River Lugg Internal Drainage Board and the Wye Valley AONB Joint Advisory Committee (both of which are geographically specific bodies and appointments to them are drawn from relevant ward members).
- 7 The Herefordshire Health and Wellbeing Board is not subject to the rules of political proportionality.
- 8 The allocation of seats to certain outside bodies to which 3 or more appointments are made, must also have regard to the rules of proportionality. This affects appointments to two outside bodies as detailed in the table below.

<b>Body</b>	<b>Seats</b>
Fire & Rescue Authority	6
Standing Advisory Council For Religious Education	3

- 9 Appendix 1 (to be tabled) details the outcome of the two by elections and the confirmed politically proportionate allocation of seats on ordinary committees. Appendix 2 (to be tabled) details the politically proportionate allocation of seats on relevant outside bodies.

## **Community Impact**

- 10 There are no implications.

## **Equality and Human Rights**

- 11 There are no implications

## **Financial Implications**

- 12 There are no implications.

## **Legal Implications**

- 13 The council is required to ensure that the allocation of seats to committees is compliant with relevant rules contained in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and regulations made under that Act. The proposals in this report comply with the requirements.

## **Risk Management**

- 14 Failure to obey the rules of political proportionality could render a committee or body unlawful. The recommendations in this report mitigate these risks.

## **Consultees**

- 15 Group Leaders

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Allocation of committee seats to political groups (to be tabled)

Appendix 2 – Allocation of seats on outside bodies to political groups (to be tabled)

## **Background Papers**

- None identified.