

CLACKMANNANSHIRE COUNCIL

Report to: Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 25 May 2022

Subject: Political Balance

Report by: Chief Executive

1.0 Purpose

1.1 Standing Order 1.5 states that at the first Council meeting after an election, Council will *"decide the political balance on each committee and sub committee. We will set aside seats to achieve a balance between the political parties, as far as is reasonably practical."*

1.2 The purpose of this report is to ask Council to decide the political balance on its standing committees.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that Council:

- a. notes the political balance of the Council further to the 5 May 2022 Local Government Election (Table 1);
- b. notes the number of seats each political group on the Council's current-standing committees based on that political balance (Tables 2 and 3);
- c. decides the balance of seats on the Council's Planning and Regulatory Committees (paragraph 3.8), guided by the considerations and statistical political balance set out in paragraph 3.7 and Tables 2 and 3;
- d. notes that this Council agenda also includes a separate paper and proposals in respect of the Council's decision-making framework and that any residual/ consequential decisions in respect of political balance are addressed therein (paragraph 3.8).

3.0 Considerations

3.1 Standing Orders state that at the first meeting of the Council after an election the political balance on committees should be determined.

- 3.2 While political balance is not an exact science, the following general principles, insofar as are practicable, apply to its determination:
- a. not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same political group;
 - b. the majority of the seats on the body is allocated to a particular political group if the number of people belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
 - c. subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on the body allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.
- 3.3 Political representation on the Council further to the recent elections is set out in Table 1 below. This shows the number of seats each group has and the percentage of overall seats that number represents.

TABLE 1

Political Groups Seats	No	%
SNP	9	50
Labour	5	28
Conservative	3	17
Green	<u>1</u>	5
	<u>18</u>	<u>100</u>

- 3.4 When the respective percentages in Table 1 are applied to seats on the Council's standing committees, the unrounded allocation of seats is as set out in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2

Political Group	% to apply	Seats Planning	Seats Regulatory	Seats Audit	Seats P & P	Seats Place	Seats People
SNP	50	5	4	4	4	4	4
Labour	28	2.8	2.24	2.24	2.24	2.24	2.24
Conservative	17	1.7	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36
Green	5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
No. of Seats		<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>

- 3.5 Clearly, it is not practicable to have the seats allocated in any other way than in round figures. Applying rounding conventions to the figures set out in Table 2 would result in the seat apportionment as set in Table 3 overleaf.

TABLE 3

Political Groups & Seats	No.	Seats Planning	Seats Regulatory	Seats Audit	Seats P & P	Seats Place	Seats People
SNP	9	5	4	see para 3.8	4	4	4
Labour	5	3	2		2	2	2
Conservative	3	2	1		1	1	1
Green	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total seats (rounded)	<u>18</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>
Total seats required	<u>18</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>
Variance		<u>1</u>	<u>(1)</u>		<u>(1)</u>	<u>(1)</u>	<u>(1)</u>

3.6 The scenario in Table 3, where generally accepted rounding principles are applied, results in a position whereby the required number of seats is not reached for individual Standing Committees with Planning having one seat too many and the majority of other committees, one seat too few.

3.7 Any further options should seek as far as possible to remain aligned with the principles stated in paragraph 3.2. Other potential considerations include:

- the roles of individual Standing Committees, for instance quasi-judicial, scrutiny, policy development, and the relative roles of Administration and Opposition Councillors in these fora
- the capacity of individual Political Groups
- the capacity and availability of individual Councillors
- the potential for additional representation such as religious representatives or young people.

3.8 Separately on this Council agenda, revised proposals for the Council’s decision-making framework are set out. These proposals potentially impact the number and nature of the Council’s existing Standing Committees, most notably, service committees in respect of Partnership and Performance, Place and People Committees. On this basis, it is suggested that Council agrees political balance in respect of Planning and Regulatory Committees at this stage, noting that any consequential or residual decisions required in respect of political balance are addressed within the separate decision-making framework paper on this agenda.

3.9 Given the interdependencies of papers and the associated decisions on this Council agenda, Council has available information within this report to support any decision required on political balance, including that based on the status quo.

4.0 Other Committees & Fora

- 4.1 Licensing Board - appointments to this body are covered by a separate item on the agenda.
- 4.2 Local Review Body - the LRB is also subject to separate legislation and there are no requirements to make any appointments to this body at the Council's statutory meeting.
- 4.3 Statutory Committees - are all subject to specific requirements set out in either legislation or guidance.
- 4.4 Ad hoc Committees - political balance will be applied to these as appropriate (e.g. to Appointments Committees) and based on the balance agreed by the Council.
- 4.5 Nominations to these other committees and fora will come forward to Council at the relevant time and as required.

5.0 Sustainability Implications

- 5.1. None

6.0 Resource Implications

- 6.1. Financial Details
- 6.2. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes
- 6.3. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes
- 6.4. Staffing

7.0 Exempt Reports

- 7.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

8.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

- (1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box)

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all

Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life

- Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential
- Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

9.0 Equalities Impact

- 9.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?
 Yes No

10.0 Legality

- 10.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

11.0 Appendices

- 11.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

None


12.0 Background Papers

- 12.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)
 Yes (please list the documents below) No

Author(s)

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Approved by

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