
Proportionality

Background

- 1** It is the duty of the County Council, following Cllr Fitzjohn and Cllr Goldsmith becoming independent members, to review the entitlement of political groups to seats on committees in line with the proportionality rules set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The rules allow adjustments to be made to make whole numbers of seats and, once the County Council has determined how adjustments should be made, appointments are made to committees on that basis. The overall number of seats will also change if the previous item is approved, to merge the Planning and Rights of Way Committees to become a single committee of 13 members, which reduces the overall number of seats to 96. This report is submitted on the basis that this proposal is agreed.
- 2** As agreed by the Council in September 2020, the vacancy in Felpham division is to be treated as a Conservative place for the purposes of calculations of proportionality as no by-election can be held before May 2021. Should any other member cease their membership of the Council prior to May 2021, the same practice would then apply to any calculation of proportionality.
- 3** The proportionality rules are as set out below:
 - (1) No political group can have all the places on a committee (the exception is the Cabinet).
 - (2) A group having an overall majority on the County Council is entitled to a majority of seats on each committee.
 - (3) The gross number of seats is allocated in accordance with each group's entitlement.
 - (4) The number of seats on each committee is allocated in accordance with each group's entitlement.
- 4** The application of these rules produce different figures so they are reconciled by applying the rules in descending order of importance. The critical rule is rule (2) if, as in the case of the County Council, there is an overall majority. Numbers of seats are then reconciled with rules (3) and (4). If there are members of the Council who do not belong to a political group (independent members) then, once the allocation of seats between the political groups has been made, any remaining seats are allocated to the independent members by the County Council.
- 5** A table showing the number of seats on committees using the above formula will follow.

Recommended

That the proportionality on committees be approved.

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Background papers

None