
Proportionality

Background

- 1** It is the duty of the County Council, following Cllr Sudan becoming an independent member, 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.
- 2** Cllr Flynn, the member for Felpham division, sadly died in July 2020. In ordinary circumstances a by-election would be arranged, but this is not possible due to the current public health emergency and the vacancy is expected to have to be held until the County Council elections in May 2021. It is therefore proposed that this should continue to be treated as a Conservative seat for the purposes of proportionality, because no other group can gain that seat. It is proposed that the Conservative Group should therefore be allowed to fill the committee seats that Cllr Flynn held. Group leaders have been consulted and have agreed that this would be followed should any other member cease to be a member of the County Council before May 2021.
- 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 is set out overleaf. As the two independent members, Cllr Buckland and Cllr Sudan, are entitled to three seats between them, they have been consulted and have agreed the proposed allocation below.

Proposed proportionality

Committee	Places	Con	Lib Dem	Lab	Ind Con	Ind 1*	Ind 2**
Performance and Finance	15	12	2	1	0	0	0
Children and Young People's Services	12 (16+)	9	1	1	1	0	0
Environment and Communities	12	9	2	1	0	0	0
Fire & Rescue Service	7	6	1	0	0	0	0
Health and Adult Social Care	12(19+)	9	2	1	0	0	0
Planning	13	10	1	1	0	0	1
Regulation, Audit and Accounts	7	5	1	0	1	0	0
Rights of Way	9	7	0	0	0	1	1
Governance	9	7	1	1	0	0	0
Standards	9	7	1	0	1	0	0
Allocation of seats	105	81	12	6	3	1	2

* Cllr Buckland

** Cllr Sudan

Recommended

That the proportionality on committees be approved.

Tony Kershaw

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Background papers

None