
Proportionality

Background

- 1 It is the duty of the County Council after an election 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 Of the total of 70 members on the County Council the number of members in each political group and their proportion of the 70 is as follows:

| Political Group | Number of Council Seats | Proportion |
|------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Conservative | 48 | 68.57% |
| Liberal Democrat | 10 | 14.29% |
| Labour | 9 | 12.86% |
| Green | 1 | 1.43% |
| Independent | 1 | 1.43% |
| Local Alliance | 1 | 1.43% |

- 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 (single members of a political party or independent members) then, once the allocation of seats between the political groups has been made, any remaining seats are allocated to those members by the County Council.
- 5 The effect on the proportionality is being calculated to see what adjustment is required. The results will be available at the Council meeting and a table showing the number of seats on committees using this formula will be circulated to members.

Tony Kershaw

Director of Law and Assurance

Contact: Charles Gauntlett, Senior Adviser, 033 022 22524,
charles.gauntlett@westsussex.gov.uk

Background papers

None