

Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Michael Vincent, Leader of the Council and Rebecca Huddleston, Chief Executive	Council	20 April 2023

Membership of Committees

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To enable changes to be made to the membership of committees for the remainder of the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 Effective arrangements to carry out the Council's non-executive decision making and advisory functions.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the revised political balance calculations following the decision by Councillor Williams to join the Conservative Group, as set out in 5.2, resulting in a total allocation of 60 seats to the Conservative Group, 13 seats to the Labour Group, four seats to the Wyre Alliance Group and three seats to the Wyre Residents Groups, be noted.
- 3.2 That a Wyre Alliance Group allocated seat be removed from the Licensing Committee.
- 3.3 That an allocated seat be given to the Conservative Group and Councillor Williams be appointed to the Licensing Committee as a Conservative Group member for the remainder of the 2022/23 Municipal Year.
- 3.4 That following discussion with the group leaders of Wyre Alliance and Wyre Residents Groups, Councillor Fairbanks retains her allocated seat on the Employment and Appeals Committee.

4. Background

- 4.1 On 4 April 2023 the Leader of the Council informed the Chief Executive that Councillor Williams had resigned from the Wyre Alliance Group and

would join the Conservative Group on 18 April 2023. As a consequence, a change needs to be made to the membership of committees, in order to comply with the political balance rules.

5. Key issues and proposals

5.1 Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires that the allocation of places on non-executive Committees of the Council must be allocated on the following criteria:

- (a) that all seats on a body are not allocated to the same Political Group;
- (b) that the majority of seats on a body is allocated to a particular Political Group, if the number of persons belonging to that Group is the majority of the Authority's membership;
- (c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary Committees of a relevant Authority which are allocated to each Political Group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary Committees of that Authority;
- (d) subject to paragraphs (a) - (c) above, that the number of seats on a body which are allocated to each Political Group bears the same proportion to the number of all seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that Group in membership of the Authority.

5.2 The overall political composition of the Council is now: 37 Conservative Members, eight Labour Members, two Wyre Alliance Members, two Wyre Residents Members and one Independent Member (who is not entitled to a seat on any committee). For the purposes of political balance, the proportion of seats to be allocated to the groups are therefore calculated as follows:

Conservative	37 Members	75.51%
Labour	8 Members	16.33%
Wyre Alliance	2 Members	4.08%
Wyre Residents	2 Members	4.08%
<hr/>		
Total	49 Members	100%

5.3 There are a total of 80 seats available on the Committees appointed by the Council. The application of the calculations in paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 leads to an overall allocation of 60 seats to the Conservative Group (an increase of one) and 13 seats to the Labour Group (no change). The calculations indicate that seven seats should be allocated between the Wyre Alliance and Wyre Residents Groups. Following discussions with the group leaders, it has been agreed that the seat on the Employment and Appeals Committee remain allocated to the Wyre Alliance Group until the election on 4 May 2023.

- 5.4** Councillor Rushforth has not been allocated any seats, because a single member does not constitute a 'group' under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 5.5** The full breakdown of allocated seats on committees is attached at Appendix 1 with the political balance calculations.
- 5.6** Approval of the recommendations set out in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.4 will enable these proposals to be implemented and compliance with the legal requirements to be met.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	As part of the Members Allowances Scheme, Group Leaders receive a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA), calculated as $n/50 \times$ basic allowance, where n = number of members in the group. Owing to the reduction in members of Wyre Alliance and the increase in members of the Conservative Group, the SRAs for these groups will change. The Conservative Group Leader would be eligible for a proportionate annual share totalling £3,363.30 (with 37 members) and the Wyre Alliance Group Leader would see a reduction, now totalling £181.80 (with two members). The impact on the budget is a net nil.
Legal	The proposals in this report are in accordance with legal requirements, as referred to in section 5 of this report. Section 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 does allow for a divergence from a literal interpretation of the calculation rules, but only if any such proposals are agreed by the Council without any member voting against.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
sustainability	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
climate change	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
Marianne Unwin	01253 887236	Marianne.Unwin@wyre.gov.uk	12/04/2023

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None	-	-

List of appendices

Appendix 1: Revised Political Balance Calculations 2022/23