

Committee: Council

Date: 1 February 2017

Wards: All

Subject: Proportionality and Appointments to Committees

Lead officer: Paul Evans, Assistant Director of Corporate Governance

Lead member: Councillor Mark Allison, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance

Contact officer: Susanne Wicks, Senior Democratic Services Officer, 020 8545 3616, democratic.services@merton.gov.uk

Recommendations: That Council

- A. Approve the allocation of seats to political groups, as detailed in Appendix A to the report.
 - B. Approve the appointment of nominees to those seats as detailed in Appendix B to this report.
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report is presented in the context of the recent resignation of a member from the Conservative Group, leading to a change in the allocation of seats to the groups represented on the council, in accordance with the principles of proportionality.
- 1.2. Council must allocate the requisite number of seats to each of the groups and approve the appointment of nominees to those seats.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. Councillor David Dean resigned from the Conservative Group on 6 January 2017, and is now non-aligned to a political group.
- 2.2. The allocation of seats to committees has been recalculated to reflect this change and is attached at appendix A.
- 2.3. The Conservative group have suggested nominations for seats to be allocated to Councillor Dean as attached at Appendix B. The nominations must be either ratified or amended by Council.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1. The Council has a statutory duty to review the representation of different groups on the Council in order to ensure that a political balance is secured on council committees, sub-committees, etc. to reflect the political composition of the Council.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1. Political groups are advised of the seat allocations due to them and have been invited to make appointments to those seats.

5 TIMETABLE

- 5.1. Subject to Council approval, the proposed changes will take immediate effect.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. None for the purposes of this report.

7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The Housing and Local Government Act 1989 contains provisions relating to the political balance on committees, the duty to allocate seats to political groups and the duty to give effect to allocations.
- 7.2. The Council has a statutory duty to review the representations of different political groups on the Council in order to ensure that a political balance is secured on council committees so as to reflect the overall political composition of the council.
- 7.3. The requirement to allocate seats must be made in accordance with the following statutory principles:
- a) All of the seats are not to be allocated to the same political group.
 - b) The majority of the seats must be allocated to the political group with a majority on the Council.
 - c) Subject to the two principles listed above, the number of seats on the total of all the ordinary committees of the Council allocated to each political group must bear the same proportion to that on full Council.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. None for the purposes of this report.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. None for the purposes of this report.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. None for the purposes of this report.

11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

- A. Allocation of seats on committees.
- B. Proposed nominations for seats allocated to Councillor Dean.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1. None.