

Licensing and Safety Committee

10 April 2025

Review of the Allocation of Committee Seats – Licensing and Safety Sub-Committees

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Summary

This report sets out the outcome of a review of the allocation of seats on the Licensing and Safety Committee's sub-committees following a change of political balance on the Council in February 2025.

1. Recommendation

1.1. The Committee is asked to approve the allocation of seats for the Licensing Sub-Committee as set out in Appendix A to the report.

2. Budget and policy framework

2.1. Whilst full Council is responsible for reviewing the allocation of committee seats for main committees, following changes to political balance, responsibility for reviewing sub-committees falls to the relevant main committee, in this case, the Licensing and Safety Committee.

3. Background

3.1. The Licensing and Safety Committee has three Sub-Committees as follows:

- 3.1.1. Licensing Sub-Committee
- 3.1.2. Licensing Hearing Panel
- 3.1.3. Licensing 1982 Act Hearing Panel

3.2. In the case of the Licensing Sub-Committee, this currently consists of seven Members as follows:

- 3.2.1. Labour and Co-operative Group – four seats
- 3.2.2. Conservative Group – two seats
- 3.2.3. Independent Group – one seat

- 3.3. As reported to full Council on 27 February 2025, the outcome of the recent by-elections held on 6 February 2025 led to a change to the political balance of the Council, which is now:

Type	Number of Councillors	%
Labour and Co-operative Group	29	49.153
Conservative Group	20	33.898
Independent Group	5	8.475
Independent Members	3	5.085
Reform UK Group	2	3.390
Total	59	100%

- 3.4. Therefore, a review of the allocation of committee seats was undertaken which led to a number of changes to the composition of the Council's main committees. Paragraph 4.9 of that report stated that reports would be submitted to the next meeting of a main committee for which there any sub-committees, for example, the Licensing and Safety Committee.

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1. The Council is required to undertake a review of the allocation of sub-committee seats following the review of the main committees which was considered and agreed by full Council on 27 February 2025.

- 4.2. In the case of this review, it was identified and agreed that a committee consisting of seven Members would be revised as follows:

- 4.2.1. Labour and Co-operative Group – three seats
- 4.2.2. Conservative Group – two seats
- 4.2.3. Independent Group – one seat
- 4.2.4. Unallocated – one seat

- 4.3. Therefore, on the basis of the outcome of the review reported to and agreed by full Council on 27 February 2025, it is recommended that the Licensing Sub-Committee's membership be approved as set out in paragraphs 4.2.1-4.2.4 above. The effect of this is for the Labour and Co-operative Group to lose one seat, which becomes unallocated on the basis that neither of the other two Groups are entitled to the seat.

- 4.4. With regards to the Licensing Hearing Panel and the Licensing 1982 Act Hearing Panel, it has been established practice of the Licensing and Safety Committee, via the Joint Meeting of Committees, held immediately after the Annual Council Meeting each year, to waive political balance for these Panels. This is because the Panels work on a rota basis and subject to Member availability, it is often impractical to set up Panels having full regard

to political balance. Taking this into account, it is not recommended to make any changes to the composition of the six rotas.

- 4.5. As always, the Annual Council Meeting and the Joint Meeting of Committees will consider and agree the allocation of committee seats and sub-committee seats for 2025/2026, on 14 May 2025.
- 4.6. Finally, there is a meeting of the Licensing Sub-Committee meeting scheduled for Friday 11 April 2025, subject to approval of the recommendation at paragraph 1.1 of the report, this means that the Labour and Co-operative Group will only be entitled to have three Members at this meeting.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. Group Whips have been consulted on these proposals.

6. Financial, legal and risk management implications

- 6.1. There are no financial or risk management implications arising from this report.
- 6.2. The proposals in this report relating to the allocation of Committee seats comply with the relevant legal requirements set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Revised allocation of committee seats for sub-committees of the Licensing and Safety Committee.

Background papers

None.