

## **Licensing and Safety Committee**

**25 March 2026**

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

Report from: Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance

Author: Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services

#### **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 the most recent review of political balance which was reported to full Council on 22 January 2026.

#### **1. Recommendation**

1.1. The Committee is asked to approve the allocation of seats for Licensing Hearing Panels and Licensing 1982 Act Hearing Panels 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. The membership of Licensing Hearing Panels and Licensing 1982 Act Hearing Panels is currently arranged through six individual Panels (Panels A-F).
- 3.4. As reported to full Council on 22 January 2026, the current political balance is set out below:

<b>Type</b>	<b>Number of Councillors</b>	<b>%</b>
Labour and Co-operative Group	31	52.542
Conservative Group	19	32.203
Independent Group	5	8.475
Reform UK Group	3	5.085
Independent Member	1	1.695
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 3.5. Therefore, a review of the allocation of committee seats was undertaken which led to a small number of changes to the composition of the Council's main committees. Paragraph 3.13 of that report stated that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of this committee setting out the outcome of a review of political balance regarding its sub-committees.

#### 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 22 January 2026.
- 4.2. Currently the Reform UK Group does not qualify for any committee seats on any committee which comprises of seven members, therefore, no change is required to the composition and membership of the Licensing Sub-Committee.
- 4.3. With regards to the Licensing Hearing Panel and the Licensing 1982 Act Hearing Panel, in recognition of the Reform UK Group's existing allocation of one seat on the Licensing and Safety Committee and noting overall political balance, a proposal to add an additional Panel (Panel G) comprised of two Labour and Co-operative Group members and one Reform UK Group member has been agreed with Group Whips, this is set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 4.4. Members are reminded that political balance is waived for these Panels each year at the Joint Meeting of Committees, to enable Panel memberships to be established taking into account Member availability and ward clashes.
- 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 the 2026/2027 municipal year, on 13 May 2026.

## 5. Consultation

5.1. Group Whips have been consulted on these proposals, as indicated in paragraph 4.3 of the report.

## 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.

### Lead officer contact

Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services, Telephone: 01634 332509 and email: [wayne.hemingway@medway.gov.uk](mailto:wayne.hemingway@medway.gov.uk)

### Appendices

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

### Background papers

None