

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

COUNCIL

22 AUGUST 2007

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE

ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO CABINET, COMMITTEES, SELECT COMMITTEES AND
OTHER BODIES

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To determine the allocation of seats to different political groups duly constituted, to the Council's Cabinet, Committees, Select Committees and Other Bodies, following recent changes to the membership of both the Liberal Democrat and Conservative groups.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Council determine the number of seats to be allocated to the Council's Committees, Select Committees and Other Bodies (Option 1 or Option 2) for the Municipal Year 2007/08.
- 2.2 That the political balance and allocation of political seats for each Committee be noted.
- 2.3 That each of the Group Leaders notify the Chief Executive, within 5 working days of the names of those Members to be appointed to Committee's, Select Committees and Other Bodies as appropriate.

3. Background

- 3.1 Council on 23 May 2007 determined the allocation of seats to the different political groups to the Council's Committees, Select Committees and Other Bodies based on (a) the membership of Members to duly constituted political groups and (b) any other Member(s).
- 3.2 On 27 June, 2007 Council agreed a number of changes to the allocation of seats on Committees following changes to the membership of the Labour Group as a result of the by-election for the Hednesford South Ward.
- 3.3 Since the Council meeting on 27 June 2007, the membership of both the Liberal Democrat and Conservative Groups has changed in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1999, Section 8.
- 3.4 Council is required to reconsider the allocation of seats to the different political groups in relation to the Council's Committees, Select Committees and Other Bodies, so as to

give effect to and reflect, so far as reasonably practicable, the political balance of the Members of the Council.

4. Details of Matters to be Considered

4.1 Council is requested to determine the number of seats to be allocated to the Council's Committees, Select Committees and Other Bodies (Option 1 or Option 2) in order that seats on the can be allocated to each of the different political groups.

4.2 Details of the two options available to Members are set out below: -

Option 1

This option, shown at Annex 1, increases the number of seats on some of the Council's Committees for all political groups and shows the number of seats allocated to each of the political groups.

Option 2

This option, shown at Annex 2, decreases the number of seats on the Council's Select Committees and increases the number of seats on some other Committees. Again, the number of seats allocated to each of the political groups is shown per Committee.

4.3 It is good practice to fix the allocation of the number of seats available for each Committee once a year at Annual Council, as anticipated by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The political balance would then determine how many seats are allocated to each group. It is proposed that after this meeting of Council, the number of seats attributed to each Committee will not change until Annual Council in May 2008, where it will be reviewed for that Municipal Year. This approach offers greater stability and consistency for the membership of Committees and is consistent with the practice adopted nationally.

5. Contribution to CHASE

5.1 The Council, through its democratic process, contributes to the each of the Council's strategic objectives, represented by the acronym CHASE.

6. Section 17 Implications

6.1 There are no identifiable implications in respect of Section 17 (Crime Prevention) arising from this report.

7. Human Rights Act Implications

7.1 There are no identifiable implications in respect of Human Rights Act arising from this report.

8. Data Protection Act Implications

8.1 There are no identifiable implications in respect of Data Protection Act arising from this report.

9. Risk Management Implications

9.1 There are no identifiable implications in respect of Risk Management arising from this report.

10. Legal Implications

10.1 A political group shall be treated as constituted when there is delivered to the proper officer of the Council a notice in writing which is signed by two or more members of the Council who wish to be treated as a political group, confirms the name of the group and the name of one member of the group who has signed the notice and who is to act as its leader. (The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, Section 8).

10.2 The Council has a duty under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ('the Act'), Section 15(3), to determine the allocation to the different political groups into which the Members of the Council are divided of all the seats which fall to be filled by appointments made from time to time by the Council.

10.3 Section 15(4) and (5) of the Act places a further duty upon the Council, in performing its obligations under subsection (3) above, to determine the allocation to different political groups of seats on Cabinet, Committees, Select Committees and Other Bodies, so as to give effect, so far as reasonably practicable, to the following principles:

- (a) that not all the seats are allocated to the same political group;
- (b) that the majority of the seats are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
- (c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of the Council which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of the Council as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Council; and
- (d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of the seats which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on Cabinet, Committees, Select Committees and Other Bodies as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Council.

11. **Financial Implications**

11.1 There are no identifiable financial implications arising from this report. Allowances for attendances at committees and other bodies are set by an independent panel and were approved in May 2007.

12. **Human Resource Implications**

12.1 There are no identifiable Human Resource implications arising from this report.

Annex 2Option 2 - Council Committees Amended Membership

	Current Membership	Proposed Membership	Cons	Lab	Lib Dem	
Scrutiny Committee	17	15	4	6	5	
Performance & Partnerships Select	9	7	2	3	2	
Children & Young People Select	9	7	2	3	2	
Healthier Communities, Housing & Older People Select	9	7	2	3	2	
Access to Skills, Economic Development & Enterprise Select	9	7	2	3	2	
Safer & Stronger Communities Select	9	7	2	3	2	
Environment Select	9	7	2	3	2	
Planning Control Committee	17	15	4	6	5	
Audit & Governance Committee	5	5	1	2	2	
Standards Committee (Council Members)	5	7	2	3	2	
Rate Relief Committee	6	7	2	3	2	
Chairman's Civic Committee	7	7	2	3	2	
Licensing & Public Protection Committee	13	15	4	6	5	
Trade Union Consultative Forum	5	5	1	2	2	
			Total:	32	49	37