

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 24 JULY 2019

REPORT BY RICHARD CASSIDY

REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE

WARD(S) AFFECTED:        ALL

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**Purpose/Summary of Report**

A change of political groups has been notified to the Council. Legislation requires that in such circumstances, a review of political balance must take place and allocations of committee seats must be agreed by the Council.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL that:</u></b>	
<b>(A)</b>	<b>The political balance of the Council be noted; and</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>The allocation of seats on the Council's committees be confirmed as set out at Essential Reference Paper B.</b>

1.0 Background

1.1 The Council reviewed the representation of political groups at its Annual meeting on 15 May 2019. Subsequently, notification of a change to a political group has been received. A further review must therefore be carried out at the next available ordinary meeting of the Council. The next meeting of the Council will not take place until 23 October 2019, so in the interests of ensuring clarity of membership of the Council's

Committees, it is preferable that the review be considered as a late item on the agenda for tonight's meeting.

## 2.0 Report

2.1 Where Members of a Council are divided into political groups, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 places a duty on the Council to review the allocation between those groups of seats on its scrutiny committees, regulatory committees and joint committees according to rules of political balance under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The aim is to ensure the political composition of those committees reflects the political representation of the Council.

2.2 Notification has been received from the Members of the Green and Labour political parties that they will, with immediate effect, need to cease to operate as the Green/Labour Group on the Council and will instead form two separate Groups of two Members each. A change to the political groups within the Council, occurring later than one month after the last review, necessitates a review of the allocation of committee places in proportion to the groups' representation on the Council.

2.3 Taking account of the change of groups as notified results in a political balance percentage of representation for each relevant group as set out in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

2.4 The Leaders of the Groups have been consulted as to the proposed distribution of seats to reflect political balance in accordance with the overall proportion which each Group represents. The proposed allocation of seats on Committees is set out for approval by the Council, in accordance with the wishes of the Group Leaders.

## 3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

None

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