

# North Tyneside Council

## Report to Council

### Date: 14 March 2013

## ITEM 13

Title: Review of Allocation of Seats on Committees to Political Groups

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor

Cabinet Member(s): Mrs L Arkley

Report from Directorate: Chief Executive's Office

Report Author: Viv Geary, Head of Law and Governance (Tel (0191) 6435339)

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Wards affected: All

### PART 1

#### 1.1 Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to determine the representation of the political groups represented on the Council on the Standing Committees following notification received to undertake a review after the by-election held in Wallsend Ward on 15 November 2012.

#### 1.2 Recommendation(s):

The Council is requested to agree to:

- (1) the revised overall allocation of seats to political groups on its committees as set out in Appendix 2 to this report and to determine the detailed breakdown of that allocation for individual committees; and
- (2) the Leaders of the Groups informing the Head of Law and Governance of the consequent changes to committee memberships by 12 noon on 15 March 2013.

#### 1.3 Forward Plan:

This report first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 6 March 2013.

#### 1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report does not relate directly to any of the themes, programmes or projects contained in the 2012-15 Council Strategic Plan.

## **1.5 Information:**

### Background

- 1.5.1 In accordance with Regulation 17 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, written notification has been received from the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group requesting a review of the allocation of seats to political groups on the Council's committees following the result of the by-election held in Wallsend Ward on 15 November 2012.
- 1.5.2 A review of the allocation of committee seats is required to be undertaken as soon as practicable after the receipt of the notification. Accordingly, the Council is now requested to approve the revised allocation of seats.
- 1.5.3 Appendix 1 to this report sets out the current allocation of committee seats to political groups.
- 1.5.4 Appendix 2 sets out the revised overall allocation of committee seats, taking into account the revised political balance of the Council following the by-election.
- 1.5.5 The allocation of seats for each of the Political Groups needs to be adjusted as follows:

#### Labour Group:

The Group's allocation of seats will reduce from 132 to 129. Based on the principles of rounding up, the Group will lose a seat on three of the Scrutiny Sub Committees which have a membership of 12 Members.

#### Conservative Group:

The Group's allocation of seats will remain the same at 39 seats. However, based on the principles of rounding up, a re-allocation of seats within that overall number is required. The Group will gain a seat on three of the Scrutiny Sub Committees which have a membership of 12 Members; lose a seat on the Planning Committee and lose a seat on two of the Committees which have a membership of 7 Members.

#### Liberal Democrat Group:

The Group's allocation of seats will increase from 12 to 15. Based on the principles of rounding up, the Group will gain a seat on the Planning Committee and gain a seat on two of the Committees which have a membership of 7 Members.

## **1.6 Decision options:**

There is no suggested alternative option as there is a statutory requirement to appoint to the Council's committees on the basis of the political balance of the Council as a whole.

## **1.7 Reasons for recommended option:**

To ensure that the Council's committees are appointed in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, which governs political balance requirements on such committees.

## **1.8 Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – current allocation of committee seats to political groups.

Appendix 2 - revised overall allocation of committee seats following the increase in the number of Liberal Democrat members as a result of the by-election held on 15 November 2012.

## **1.9 Contact officers:**

David Brown, Law and Governance (Tel. 643 5358)  
Alison Campbell, Finance Business Manager, Finance and Resources Directorate (Tel. 643 7034)

## **1.10 Background information:**

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- Local Government and Housing Act 1989
- The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990
- Report to and minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 17 May 2012 and the Council meeting held on 4 July 2012 (rearranged from 28 June 2012).

## **PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING**

### **2.1 Finance and other resources**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **2.2 Legal**

Regulation 17 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 requires that a review of the allocation of seats on committees to political groups is undertaken as soon as practicable after a request is made to review such allocation and is received by the proper officer more than one month after the last review.

Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the following principles to be applied in determining the allocation of committee seats to political groups:

- a) that not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same political group
- b) that the majority of the seats on the body is 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 an authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all seats on the ordinary committees of that authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority; and

- d) subject to paragraphs a) to c) above, that the number of the seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

### **2.3 Consultation/community engagement**

The Group Leaders have been consulted on this report.

### **2.4 Human rights**

There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

### **2.5 Equalities and diversity**

There are no equalities and diversity implications arising from this report.

### **2.6 Risk management**

There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

### **2.7 Crime and disorder**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

### **2.8 Environment and sustainability**

There are no environment and sustainability implications arising from this report.

## **PART 3 - SIGN OFF**

- Chief Executive

- Chief Finance Officer

- Monitoring Officer

- Strategic Manager Policy and Partnerships