
Report To:	Inverclyde Council	Date :	7 October 2010
Report By:	Chief Executive	Report No:	CE/006/10/JWM
Contact Officer:	Elaine Paterson	Contact No:	01475 712139
Subject:	Political Balance On Committees		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to (i) advise the Council of the requirements to ensure political balance on committees in the light of Councillor George White's recent resignation from the Scottish Liberal Democrat Group and (ii) to request that the Council considers the terms of this report.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Councillor George White has recently intimated his resignation from the Scottish Liberal Democrat Party & Group and that he is now a member of the Scottish Liberal Party.
- 2.2 This resignation means that the political balance on the Council's committees requires to be reviewed to comply with the Scheme of Administration.
- 2.3 Paragraph 5.4 of the Scheme of Administration requires the Council to ensure, as far as is practicable, that in making appointments to committees, sub-committees and outside bodies (but only where more than two representatives of the Council to an outside body are required), the balance of political representation on the Council is reflected.
- 2.4 The Appendix attached to this report details the division of seats on the Council's committees as approved by the Council at its meeting of 18 December 2008. This division was made following the resignation of Councillor McCallum from the Labour Group. It also details a proposed split which, in the light of the changed circumstances, meets the terms of the Council's Scheme of Administration.
- 2.5 The Council has eight main committees. Two further committees, the Human Resources Appeals Board and the Education Appeals Board operate fully as quasi judicial committees. In addition, the Licensing Board is a separate statutory body. It is therefore suggested that, in the current circumstances, the re-balancing exercise is confined to the eight main committees.
- 2.6 The re-balancing exercise is basically confined to the Liberal Democrat Group and the effect of Councillor White's resignation is that they will lose a seat on one half of the Council's main committees to accommodate Councillor White. In effect, Councillor White is entitled to be a member of four main committees. On those committees where he is a member, the number of members from the Liberal Democrat Group will drop from two to one.
- 2.7 Currently, Councillor White is a member of the Regeneration Committee and of the Safe, Sustainable Communities Committee. To maintain a correct balance, the Liberal Democrat Group will require to cede one seat on two further committees to Councillor White.

2.8 It is therefore suggested that the membership of two of the following committees requires to be adjusted:-

General Purposes Board;
Audit;
Policy & Resources;
Education & Lifelong Learning;
Health & Social care Committee; and
Planning Board.

2.9 With regard to representation on Outside Bodies, the Council may wish to consider its representation on the Strathclyde Fire & Rescue Board & Strathclyde Police Board.

2.10 There are no financial implications related to this report.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

3.1 It is recommended that the Council:-

- (a) considers the terms of this report;
- (b) approves the re-balancing of committees as detailed on page 1 of Appendix 1;
- (c) makes an appropriate adjustment to the membership of its committees to accord with recommendation (b) and paragraph 2.8 hereof; and
- (d) considers its representation on the Strathclyde Fire & Rescue Board & Strathclyde Police Board;

John W Mundell
Chief Executive

APPENDIX

Political Split for Committee – Agreed – December 2008

Political Representation	No. of Members	Proportion of Total (20)	Applied to Committees (11)	Representation 50% Committees Incl. Independent (Rounded up Or down to nearest whole No.)	Representation 50% Committees Excl. Independent (Rounded up Or down to nearest whole No.)
Coalition*	10	0.5	5.5	5	6
SNP	5	0.25	2.75	3	3
Liberal Democrat	4	0.2	2.2	2	2
Independent	1	0.05	0.55	1	0
	20	1		11	11

Note: Coalition*
8 Labour, 1 Conservative, 1 Independent

Political Split for Committees – Suggested April – August 2010

Political Representation	No. of Members	Proportion of Total (20)	Applied to Committees (11)	Representation 50% Committees Incl. Independent/Liberal (Rounded up or down to nearest whole No.)	Representation 50% Committees Excl. Independent/Liberal (Rounded up or down to nearest whole No.)
Coalition*	10	0.5	5.5	5	6
SNP	5	0.25	2.75	3	3
Liberal Democrat	3	0.15	1.65	1	2
Liberal Party	1	0.05	0.55	1	0
<u>Independent</u>	1	0.05	0.55	1	0
	20	1		11	11

Note: Coalition*
8 Labour, 1 Conservative, 1 Independent

Existing Committee Membership with Revised Political Groupings

Councillor	Policy & Resources	Regeneration	Education & Lifelong Learning	Health & Social Care	Safe Sustainable Communities	Audit	General Purposes	Planning Board	HR Appeals Board	Education Appeals Board	Inverclyde Licensing Board	
McCabe	1	1	1	1	1					1		6
McKenzie	1	1	1				1	1				5
Clocherty	1	1	1			1						4
McIlwee	1			1	1		1		1	1		6
Moran	1			1	1		1	1	1	1	1	8
Loughran		1	1			1		1				4
McCormick			1	1		1						3
Dorrian				1	1	1	1	1		1	1	7
Wilson	1		1		1			1			1	5
Ahlfeld		1		1	1	1	1				1	6
	6	5	6	6	6	5	5	5	2	4	4	54
Brooks	1		1	1		1	1	1	1		1	8
Nelson	1	1			1	1		1		1		6
MacLeod	1	1		1	1	1	1		1	1		8
Osborne		1	1						1			3
Grieve			1	1	1		1	1			1	6
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	31
Blair	1	1	1			1						4
White		1			1						1	3
Fyfe	1		1	1		1	1	1				6
Rebecchi				1	1		1	1	1	1		6
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	19
McCallum		1				1	1	1	1		1	6
	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	6
Totals	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	7	7	8	110