

**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**ANNUAL MEETING – WEDNESDAY, 4<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2014**

**APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES**  
**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**(Contact: Keith Butler, Tel: (01993) 861521)**

**1. PURPOSE**

To appoint the Committees of the Council, in accordance with the Constitution and, where applicable, the rules relating to political balance.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (a) That the Committees indicated in paragraph 3.2 below be appointed, with the specified membership;
- (b) That seats on those Committees be allocated to the political groups and the non-aligned member in accordance with the rules relating to political balance, and as indicated in the Table under paragraph 3.5 below;
- (c) That Members be appointed to each of the Committees in accordance with the wishes of the political groups;
- (d) That in accordance with, and subject to the exceptions in, Rule 4 of the Council Procedure Rules, all Members of each political group not appointed to a committee or sub-committee be named as alternate members for the member or members of that group who have been appointed to that committee or sub-committee;
- (e) That, pursuant to paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7, Council decides which additional seats on the Overview and Scrutiny Committees should be allocated to the Conservative and Labour Groups and the non-aligned member;
- (f) That the Licensing Committee be re-constituted for 2014-2015, with a membership in the range of 10-15; and
- (g) That seats on the Licensing Committee be allocated to the political groups in accordance with the principles of political balance, and having regard to the information in paragraph 3.8 below, and be filled in accordance with their wishes.

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1. The Constitution of the Council provides for the appointment by the Council of the Overview and Scrutiny and other Committees. The respective Committees will then appoint any Sub-Committees or Panels, as necessary.

3.2. In accordance with the Constitution, the Committees to be appointed are as follows:

**Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

Finance and Management	(between nine and sixteen members)
Economic and Social	(between nine and sixteen members)
Environment	(between nine and sixteen members)

### **Other Committees**

Audit & General Purposes	(seventeen members)
Development Control	(twenty four members)
Human Resources	(seven members)
Urgency	(eleven members suggested)
Licensing Committee	(between ten and fifteen members)

- 3.3. It is for Council to decide how many Members are appointed to each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees (subject to the range set out above) and to the Urgency Committee. However, in previous years each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees has comprised 14 members and the Urgency Committee 11 members, and those figures have been used for the calculations in this report.
- 3.4. All of the Committees, with the exception of the Licensing Committee, are required to be appointed in accordance with the rules relating to political balance. Accordingly, the arithmetical calculations have been based on 40 Conservative Group members, five Labour, and three Liberal Democrats, and have also had to take into account the fact that there is one member of the Council who is not a member of a political group. Subject to all the rules on political balance, it is for Council to decide where seats are allocated to that member.
- 3.5. The rounding of the figures in accordance with the rules leads to the situation indicated in Table I below.

**Table I – Allocation of Seats**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Seats</b>	<b>Con</b>	<b>Lab</b>	<b>Lib Dem</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>(Total)</b>
(Total seats entitlement)	101	83	10	6	2	101
Audit & General Purposes	17	14	2	1	0	17
Development Control	24	20	2	1	1	24
Human Resources	7	6	1	0	0	7
Urgency	11	9	1	1	0	11
Econ & Soc O & S	14	11	1	1	0	13
Fin & Man O & S	14	11	1	1	0	13
Environment O & S	14	11	1	1	0	13
Resulting Total	101	82	9	6	1	98
Required Adjustment		+1	+1	0	+1	

- 3.6. It can be seen from the above that using the current balance figures and rounding as necessary, leads to one seat fewer than the number available being allocated on each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees; and to an overall shortfall of one seat each for the Conservative and Labour Groups and one for the non-aligned member. Accordingly, Council will need to decide on which of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees the respective extra seats are allocated.
- 3.7. The rules of political balance do not apply to the Licensing Committee. Under the statute, it must have between 10 and 15 members. The number of members has varied at times over the years, but in recent years the Committee has had 11

seats. As the Council has never specified an ongoing number of members of the Committee it could decide to change the number for 2014/2015 if it wished. Notwithstanding the fact that the rules of political balance do not apply, the Council previously decided that the best way to allocate the seats was in accordance with the principles of political balance, and in 2013/2014 there were nine Conservative members, one Labour and one Liberal Democrat.

- 3.8. Under the current political balance of the Council, the Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups would have one member each if the Committee had between 10 and 13 members; for a Committee with 14 members, either the Conservative Group would have 12 seats, or the Labour Group would have two seats; and with 15 seats the allocation would be 12:2:1.
- 3.9. It is hoped that the wishes of each of the political groups, plus the non-aligned member, in relation to the filling of the allocated seats will be tabled at the meeting.
- 3.10. Council should also be aware that the political balance requirements may be disregarded if any decision to do so is made without any member voting against.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

This report has no financial implications.

David Neudegg  
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Background Papers:

None.