

## REVISED REPORT TO ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL - THURSDAY, 25 APRIL 2024

### COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEES

#### 1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 The Council is requested to note the change in political group affiliation of Councillors Ross and Victor and to consider the impact of these changes on the composition of committees.

1.1.1 Councillor Ross is no longer a member of the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Group nor the Administration with effect from 22 February 2024 and will be an Independent Member.

1.1.2 Councillor Victor has joined the SNP group and the Opposition Coalition with effect from 22 April 2024.

#### 1.2 The Council is recommended to:

1.2.1 **note, following notification to the Chief Executive of the change in political group affiliation of Councillors Ross and Victor, the following numbers:**

- **The Administration has 45 members (comprising Scottish Conservative and Unionist (24, previously 25), Liberal Democrats (14) and Administration Independents (7)),**
- **The Opposition Coalition has 23 members (comprising SNP (21, previously 20) and the Democratic Independent Group (2)); and**
- **There are two Independent members.**

1.2.2 **Consider and agree, as a result of the notifications outlined at recommendation 1.2.1 above, –**

- **the political proportionality for the current standard 14 member, 8 member and 5 member committees and for sub-committees and working groups, and**
- **the composition of the four Policy Committees and the Audit Committee, having regard to the principle of each member being allocated one committee place.**

#### 2 Decision Making Route

2.1 The Council at its meeting on 19 May 2022 (Item 9) approved the allocation of places and the appointment of members to committees, sub-committees, joint

committees and working groups to reflect the political proportionality of the Council.

2.2 Following the change in political affiliation of Councillor Ross, the Administration has 45 members (comprising Scottish Conservative and Unionist (24 (previously 25)), Liberal Democrats (14) and Administration Independents (7).

2.3 Following the change in political affiliation of Councillor Victor, the Opposition Coalition has 23 members (comprising SNP (21 (previously 20)) and the Democratic Independent Group (2), and

2.4 there are two Independent members.

2.5 The overall percentages are -

<b>Total Members</b>		
Scottish Conservative and Unionist, Liberal Democrat, Administration Independents	45/70	64.29%
Scottish National Party and Democratic Independent Group	23/70	32.86%
Individual	2/70	2.85%

2.6 This provides the following percentages for standard 14, 8 and 5 member Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups -

<b>Groups</b>	<b>14 member</b>		<b>8 member</b>		<b>5 member</b>	
Administration	64.29% x 14 = 9.0	<b>9</b>	64.29% x 8 = 5.14	<b>5</b>	64.29% x 5 = 3.2	<b>3</b>
Opposition Coalition	32.86% x 14 = 4.6	<b>5</b>	32.86% x 8 = 2.6	<b>3</b>	32.86% x 5 = 1.64	<b>2</b>
Individual	2.85% x 14 = 0.4	<b>0</b>	2.85% x 8 = 0.22	<b>0</b>	2.85% x 5 = 0.14	<b>0</b>
<b>Totals</b>		<b>14</b>		<b>8</b>		<b>5</b>

It should be borne in mind that to achieve political balance is never an exact science since percentages and whole places on committees rarely precisely coincide. The figures are usually sensibly rounded with the higher number being rounded up, and the smaller rounded downwards or, where equal, Council determine the proportionality. This provides a fair and reasonable means of achieving political proportionality and a workable structure for a council of 70 members.

### **3 Discussion**

3.1 In February 2024 Council agreed that, in relation to the 14 member committee membership, the Opposition Coalition allocation which was 4.4 would be

rounded up to 5 members given that the individual allocation was 0.4. Having regard to the recent changes of political affiliation, the figures are now that the Opposition Coalition has increased to 4.6 and the Individual allocation is reduced to 0.4.

3.2 The current composition of the Policy Committees and Audit Committee is as follows:-

	Business Services	Education and Children's	Infrastructure Services	Communities	Audit	Total
Administration	9	9	10	9	9	<b>46</b>
Opposition Coalition	4	5	4	5	4	<b>22</b>
Independent	1	0	0	0	1	<b>2</b>

3.3 Councillor Ross held an administration nominated place on Infrastructure Services Committee until her resignation. Councillor Victor holds an Independent place on the Business Services Committee.

3.4 In order to meet the aspiration of one member, one committee place in a council of 70 members with four policy committees and an audit committee, the Administration need to reduce by one committee place to Total 45; the Opposition Coalition need to increase by one committee place to Total 23; and the Independents remain the same in number, 2, although are made up of different councillors (Councillors Buchan and Ross as opposed to previously Councillors Buchan and Victor).

#### 4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

4.1 This report helps deliver the Council's Strategic Priorities by ensuring transparency in decision making.

Pillar	Priority
Our People	Learning for Life Health & Wellbeing
Our Environment	Climate Change Resilient Communities
Our Economy	Economic Growth Infrastructure and public assets

4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Financial			X
Staffing			X
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland			X
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			X
Climate Change and Sustainability			X
Health and Wellbeing			X
Town Centre First			X

4.3 There are no staffing or financial implications relating to this report.

4.4 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment process has not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessments to be undertaken because the changes proposed are procedural matters and do not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.

4.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

[Aberdeenshire Corporate Risks](#)

ACORP006 – Reputation Management

[Business Services Directorate Risks](#)

BSSR007 – Council Transition

**5 Scheme of Governance**

5.1 The Monitoring Officer within Business Services has been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

5.2 Section A.2.1 of the List of Committee Powers at Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance requires any changes in committee structure and appointments to be determined by Full Council.

**Rob Simpson**

**Director of Business Services**

Report prepared by Fiona M Stewart, Principal Committee Services Officer  
22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024