

Report subject	Review of the political balance of the Council, the allocation of seats on Committees to each political group and the appointment of Councillors to Committees and Outside Bodies
Meeting date	14 October 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	The Council is asked to consider and approve the review of the political balance of the Council, the allocation of seats on Committees to each political group, the appointment of Councillors on Committees and appointments to outside bodies following the result of the by-election in the Talbot and Branksome Woods Ward on 11 September 2025 and other political group changes.
Recommendations	It is RECOMMENDED that: (a) the revised political balance of the Council, as set out in Table 1 to this report be noted; (b) the allocation of seats to each political group, as set out in Table 2 to this report, be approved; (c) the appointment of Councillors to Committees and Boards, taking into account the wishes of each political group, as detailed in Table 3 to this report, be approved; (d) the allocation of seats to each political group to the outside bodies, as detailed in Table 4 to this report, be approved; (e) the appointment of Councillors to the outside bodies, taking into account the wishes of each political group, as detailed in Table 5 to this report, be approved.
Reason for recommendations	To ensure compliance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and associated Regulations in reviewing and approving the political balance of the Council and the allocation of seats together with any other associated issues.

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Millie Earl, Leader of the Council
Corporate Director	Aidan Dunn, Chief Executive
Report Authors	Richard Jones, Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

Background

1. The Council is asked to consider the political balance of the Council following notification of the resignation of Councillors Dower and G Martin from the Labour Group and the establishment of a new political group named BCP Independents comprising Councillors Bartlett, Edwards, Dower, G Martin and Rampton and the by-election for the vacancy in the Talbot and Branksome Woods Ward on 11 September.
2. Councillor Dawn Logan was duly elected as Councillor and the proper officer has received notice that Councillor Logan has joined the Liberal Democrat political group.
3. Set out in Table 1 below is the revised political balance of the Council reflecting these changes.

Table1	No of Seats	% of total seats	Seat entitlement
Liberal Democrat	29	38.16	42.74
Conservative	11	14.47	16.21
Christchurch Independents	8	10.53	11.79
Labour	8	10.53	11.79
Green	6	7.89	8.84
BCP Independents	5	6.58	7.37
Poole People	5	6.58	7.37
Independents	2	2.63	2.95
Poole Engage	2	2.63	2.95
Total	76		112

4. The following principles are contained within Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and have been amended under the regulations to take account of the fact that not all the seats are necessarily held by members of political groups. They need to be applied in the following order and as far as practicably possible:
 - (a) Not all the seats on a committee are allocated to the same political group.
 - (b) Where a group has a majority of seats on the Authority it should have the majority of seats on each committee.
 - (c) The third rule provides that, without being inconsistent with the first two rules, the number of seats allocated to each political group on all the ordinary committees

taken together be as near as reasonably practicable proportionate to their proportion of seats as a proportion of the authority as a whole.

- (d) Finally, so far as is consistent with the above each group should be allocated seats on each committee to reflect their proportion of seats on the authority.
5. The allocation of seats other than in accordance with the above principles, requires approval without dissent.
 6. The Council is asked to consider the proposed allocation of seats to political groups as detailed in Table 2 below in accordance with the above principles. The last column in the table identifies there is no variance in the allocation of seats compared to calculations set out in Table 1.
 7. Seats on committees, which are allocated to political groups, are to be filled by councillors of the respective political group in accordance with the wishes of the relevant group.

Table 2 – Allocation of seats on Committees/Boards

Political Group	Western BCP Planning Committee	Eastern BCP Planning Committee	Licensing Committee	Standards Committee	Appeals Committee	Audit & Governance Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Board	Environment and Place O&S Committee	Health & Adult Social Care O&S Committee	Children's Services O&S Committee	Investigation and Disciplinary Committee	Total	Variance (+/-)
Liberal Democrat	4	4	5	3	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	43	+ 0
Conservative	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	16	+ 0
Christchurch Independents	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	12	+ 0
Labour	1	1	1	1	-	1	2	2	1	2	-	12	+ 0
Green	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	9	+ 0
BCP Independents	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	7	+ 0
Poole People	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	7	+ 0
Independents	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	3	+ 0
Poole Engage	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	3	+ 0
Total	11	11	14	7	7	9	13	11	11	11	7	112	

Appointment of Councillors to Committees

8. The following table (Table 3) therefore sets out the proposed membership of the Committees and Boards as advised by the respective political groups. Where a political group has not advised of their proposed members to serve on each committee or board at the time of publication, this will be shown as a vacancy.
9. The Political Groups may at any time alter their Group's membership of Committees and Boards, but any seats otherwise allocated including to the unaligned Members

must be approved by full Council. Members are asked to consider the following and any revised nominations submitted by the political groups.

Table 3 – Appointments to Committees/Boards

	Western BCP Planning Committee	Eastern BCP Planning Committee	Licensing Committee	Standards Committee	Appeals Committee	Audit & Governance Committee	Overview & Scrutiny Board	Environment & Place O&S Committee	Health & Adult Social Care O&S Committee	Children's Services O&S Committee	Investigation and Disciplinary Committee
Liberal Democrat	Chapmanlaw Clements Le Poidevin Sidaway	Clements Gillett Le Poidevin Tarling	Chapmanlaw Harman Matthews Richardson Sidaway	Chapmanlaw Nanov o Pattinson- West	Brown, O Le Poidevin Vacancy	Andrew s Slade, V Tarling Weight	Goodall Mackrow Trent Walters Weight	Chick Clements Gillett Goodall	Logan Matthews Richardson Slade, P	Brown, O Harman Mackrow Walters	Earl * Cox ** Pattinson- West
Conservative	Adams Challinor	Slade, T Williams	Filer Williams	Wright	Dove	Beesley	Beesley Wright	d'Orton- Gibson	Allen	Farr Slade, T	Dove
Christchurch Independents	McCormack	Flagg Hilliard	Flagg Hilliard	Ricketts	Phipps	Phipps	Dedman	Ricketts	Dedman	Martin, D	-
Labour	Cooper	Canavan	Farquhar	Farquhar	-	Connolly	Aitkenhead Canavan	Martin, J Moriarty	Canavan	Cooper Carr- Brown	-
Green	Salmon, K	Salmon, J	Keddie	Armstrong	-	Armstrong	Salmon, K	Rigby	Salmon, J	Bull	-
BCP Independents	Martin, G	-	Bartlett	-	Rampton	Bartlett	-	Edwards	Dower	-	Bartlett
Poole People	Hitchcock	Rice	Howell	-	Miles	-	Rice	Rice	-	Hitchcock	-
Independents	-	-	-	-	-	-	Northover	-	Northover	-	Northover
Poole Engage	-	-	Vacancy	-	-	-	-	-	Bagwell	-	Butt

* Leader of the Council in accordance with the Constitution

** Portfolio Holder in accordance with the Constitution

Allocation of Outside Body Seats to Political Groups

10. The following tables (Tables 4 and 5) set out the allocation of seats and named appointments on outside bodies which are subject to the political balance requirements. The last column in Table 4 identifies there is a variance of one seat due to the current make-up of the council and rounding of seat entitlements. It is not possible to achieve overall balance and the proposals as outlined are compliant with the political balance principles.

Table 4 – Allocation of seats on Outside Bodies

	Entitlement based on 17 Seats	Dorset Police and Crime Panel	Dorset and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority	Dorset Pension Fund Committee	Lower Central Gardens Trust Board *	Total	Variance (+/-)
Liberal Democrat	6	1	2	1	2	6	+ 0
Conservative	3	-	1	1	1	3	+ 0
Christchurch Independents	2	1	1	-	-	2	+ 0
Labour	2	1	-	-	1	2	+ 0
Green	1	1	-	-	-	1	+ 0
BCP Independents	2	1	-	-	-	1	- 1
Poole People	2	-	1	1	-	2	+ 0
Independents	0	-	-	-	-	0	+ 0
Poole Engage	0	-	-	-	-	0	+ 0
Total	18	5	5	3	4	17	

* Membership on Lower Central Gardens Trust Board must be not less than 4 and not more than 5.

Table 5 - Appointment of Councillors to Outside Bodies

	Dorset Police and Crime Panel	Dorset and Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority	Dorset Pension Fund Committee	Lower Central Gardens Trust Board *
Liberal Democrat	Sidaway	Brown, O Weight	Brown, D	Gillett Nanovo
Conservative	-	Adams	Beesley	Williams
Christchurch Independents	Flagg	Hilliard	-	-
Labour	Canavan	-	-	Martin, J
Green	Keddie	-	-	-
BCP Independents	Rampton	-	-	-
Poole People	-	Miles	Rice	-
Independents	-	-	-	-
Poole Engage	-	-	-	-

Summary of financial implications

11. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Summary of legal implications

12. The Council is required to comply with the relevant legislation and regulations when considering and approving the political balance of the Council and the allocation of seats.

13. The Act and Regulations make provisions where a proposal is not as far as possible politically representative. This includes instances where a Group gives up a seat which they are entitled to hold in favour of another and distorts the political balance rules. In such an instance such a proposal can only be accepted if no member votes against them.

14. The proposals, as set out in this report, comply with the political balance principles and can be approved with a simple majority.

Summary of human resources implications

15. There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

Summary of sustainability impact

16. There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

Summary of public health implications

17. There are no public health implications associated with this report

Summary of equality implications

18. There are no equality implications associated with this report. It would be a matter for the political groups to consider any equality issues through their own appointment process.

Summary of risk assessment

19. There are no risk implications associated with this report.

Background papers

None

Appendices

There are no appendices to this report.