

Report to: Meeting of the Full Council – 16 December 2025

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Peacock, Strategy, Performance & Finance

Director Lead: John Robinson, Chief Executive

Lead Officer: Nigel Hill, Business Manager - Elections & Democratic Services, Ext. 5243

Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Political Composition of the Council and Allocation of Seats on Committees
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	In accordance with the Constitution, to consider the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules, following two by-elections held to fill two vacancies.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That the Council: a) approve the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with <b>Appendix A</b> to the report; and b) note the Committee memberships in the schedule to be circulated ahead of the meeting.
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	To ensure the Council complies with Section 15 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees & Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Section 15 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to consider the political composition of the Council. The Act, together with Local Government (Committees & Political Groups) Regulations 1990, require local authorities to allocate seats on Committees of a local authority on a proportional basis, in accordance with the number of seats on the Council held by each political group.
- 1.2 The political composition of the Council and allocation of seats to committees was last considered and approved by the Council at their meeting held on 15 July 2025. This change to the allocation of seats was required given the deletion of the General Purposes Committee and creation of the Audit & Accounts Committee and the Governance, General Purposes and LGR Committee. This changed the overall number of seats on committees from 77 to 71.
- 1.3 Following the July Council, on 1 September 2025 and 2 September 2025 respectively, Councillors Adrian Amer (Castle Ward) and Emma Oldham (Balderton North & Coddington Ward) formally resigned from the Council.

- 1.4 By-elections for the two vacancies were held on 6 November 2025. Michelle Home (Reform UK) was elected in the Castle Ward and Kay Smith (Reform UK) was elected in the Balderton North & Coddington Ward. The two new Councillors have given notice that they wish to form a Reform political group on the Council. Therefore, the political composition of the Council is now as follows:

Political Group	Membership	Percentage of Council (rounded)
Conservative	12	30.77
Labour	10	25.64
Independents for Newark & District	6	15.38
Liberal Democrats	3	7.69
Newark & Sherwood Independents	2	5.14
Reform	2	5.14
Green	1	2.56

Independent Non-Aligned Members	Percentage of Council (rounded)
Cllr Brown	2.56
Cllr Holloway	2.56
Cllr Lee	2.56

- 1.5 Those Committees which are required to reflect political balance rules are as follows:

Committee	No. of Members
Policy & Performance Improvement Committee	15
Planning Committee	15
Licensing Committee	15
Audit & Accounts Committee	9
Governance, General Purposes & LGR Committee	12
Board of Gilstrap Trustees	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>71 seats</b>

- 1.6 The following calculation can be made in terms of allocation of seats:

			<u>Rounded</u>
Conservative	71 x 30.77%	21.84	22
Labour	71 x 25.64%	18.20	18
Independents for Newark & District	71 x 15.38%	10.92	11
Liberal Democrats	71 x 7.69%	5.46	5
N&S District Independents	71 x 5.14%	3.65	4
Reform	71 x 5.14%	3.65	4
Green (Spoors)	71 x 2.56%	1.84	2
Ind N/A (Brown)	71 x 2.56%	1.84	1
Ind N/A (Holloway)	71 x 2.56%	1.84	2
Ind N/A (Lee)	71 x 2.56%	1.84	2
			<hr/> 71 <hr/>

- 1.7 The allocation of seats on Committees to each political group calculated above, gives seats to the independent non-aligned Members, but the allocation of these seats is at the discretion of the Full Council, and currently Councillor Irene Brown only has one seat on Committees.
- 1.8 The revised matrix at **Appendix A** sets out the proposed allocation of seats to political groups.

## 2.0 **Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Implications Considered			
Yes – relevant and included / NA – not applicable			
Financial	NA	Equality & Diversity	NA
Human Resources	NA	Human Rights	NA
Legal	Yes	Data Protection	NA
Digital & Cyber Security	NA	Safeguarding	NA
Sustainability	NA	Crime & Disorder	NA
LGR	NA	Tenant Consultation	NA

### Legal Implications (LEG2526/5423)

- 2.1 Full Council is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report. There is no legal requirement for Non-aligned Independent Members to be allocated Committee seats.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None