

Calculation of Political Balance (May 2023)

Political Balance

1.1 The political balance of the Council would be as follows:

Political Party	Number of seats on the Council	Proportion expressed as a percentage
Liberal Democrats	17	35.41%
Conservative	11	22.92%
Tunbridge Wells Alliance	11	22.92%
Labour	8	16.66%
Unallocated	1	2.08%
Totals	48	99.99%

1.2 The political balance legislation requires that committees are established to reflect the overall political balance of the Council. The Council must allocate seats on committees and other prescribed bodies so as to give effect to the political balance rules.

1.3 Section 15(5) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out four rules, and requires authorities to apply them in descending order of priority:

- 1) When some or all of the members of an authority have formed into two or more political groups, then no committee may comprise just members from one political group;
- 2) Where a majority of members of the Council are members of one political group, that political group must have a majority of the seats on each committee;
- 3) Without being inconsistent with the first two rules, the number of seats allocated to each political group on all the committees taken together be as near as possible proportionate to their strength on the Council; and
- 4) So far as is consistent with rules 1-3, each political party must be allocated that number of seats on each committee taken individually as is proportionate to their strength on the Council.

Allocation of seats on committees

1.4 For the purposes of allocating seats, the Cabinet Advisory Boards are committees of the Full Council and must be treated in the same way as all other committees.

1.5 The allocation applies in respect of the number of 'ordinary' seats, but not including substitute seats.

1.6 The total allocation of seats applied to each political group does not include the Cabinet (or any Cabinet sub-committees, working groups or Executive appointments), which are not subject to the statutory rules on political balance.

1.7 The table below sets out the total number of applicable committee seats:

Applicable committees	Total number of seats on each committee
Appeals Committee	5
Audit & Governance Committee	8
General Purposes Committee	8
Investigating & Disciplinary Committee	5
Licensing Committee	15
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	12
Planning Committee	14
Communities & Economic Development Cabinet Advisory Board	11
Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Board	11
Planning & Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board	11
Total	100

1.8 The table below sets out the overall allocation of seats to each political group across all committees, in accordance with the above political balance (rule 3):

Political group	Overall allocation of seats to all committees
Liberal Democrats	35
Conservative	23
Tunbridge Wells Alliance	23
Labour	17
Unallocated seats	2
Total	100

1.9 A political group can only be formed if it has at least two elected members. The political balance legislation requires that the unallocated seats are given to those members who are not part of a political group.

1.10 Noting the calculations on the final page, the table below sets out the allocation of seats to each political group and independents on each committee in accordance with the above political balance (rule 4) which must be consistent with the totals in the table under paragraph 1.8 (rule 3).

Committees	LIB	CON	TWA	LAB	Ind
Appeals Committee	2	1	1	1	0
Audit & Governance Committee	3	2	2	1	0
General Purposes Committee	3	2	2	1	0
Investigating & Disciplinary Committee	2	1	1	1	0
Licensing Committee	5	3	3	3	0
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4	3	3	2	0
Planning Committee	5	3	3	2	0
Communities & Economic Development C.A.B.	4	3	3	2	0
Finance & Governance C.A.B.	4	3	3	2	0
Planning & Transportation C.A.B.	4	3	3	2	0
Total	36	24	24	17	0
Total para 1.8	35	23	13	17	2
Adjustment required	-1	-1	-1	-	+2

1.11 The table below summarises the changes to particular committees as a result of rebalancing:

Calculation of seats on each committee

	Lib Dem	Cons	TWA	Lab	Ind
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Appeals Committee (5 seats)

Calculation	1.77	1.15	1.15	0.83	0.10
Rebalanced	2	1	1	1	0

Audit and Governance Committee (8 seats)

Calculation	2.8	1.83	1.83	1.33	0.16
Rebalanced	3	2	2	1	0

General Purposes Committee (8 seats)

Calculation	2.8	1.83	1.83	1.33	0.165
Rebalanced	3	2	2	1	0

Investigating and Disciplinary Committee (5 seats)

Calculation	1.77	1.15	1.15	0.83	0.10
Rebalanced	2	1	1	1	0

Licensing Committee (15 seats)

Calculation	5.31	3.44	3.44	2.5	0.31
Rebalanced	5	3	3	3	1

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (12 seats)

Calculation	4.24	2.75	2.75	1.99	0.25
Rebalanced	4	3	3	2	0

Planning Committee (14 seats)

Calculation	4.95	3.20	3.20	2.33	0.3
Rebalanced	5	3	3	2	1

Communities and Economic Development CAB (11 seats)

Calculation	3.83	2.52	2.52	1.83	0.22
Rebalanced	3	3	3	2	0

Finance and Governance CAB (11 seats)

Calculation	3.89	2.52	2.52	1.80	0.22
Rebalanced	4	2	2	2	0

Planning and Transportation CAB (11 seats)

Calculation	3.89	2.52	2.52	1.83	0.22
Rebalanced	4	3	2	2	0

TOTAL

Total of each committee	35	23	23	17	2
Total of all committees from para 1.8	35	23	23	17	2