

MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF THE:	FULL AUTHORITY		
DATE:	15 TH OCTOBER 2020	REPORT NO:	CFO/051/20
PRESENTING OFFICER	ACTING MONITORING OFFICER		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	RIA GROVES	REPORT AUTHOR:	KELLY KELLAWAY
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM		
TITLE OF REPORT:	CHANGE IN POLITICAL BALANCE OF MFRA FOR 2020/21		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A:	COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP TEMPLATE
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Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of a change in the political balance of MFRA for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year, as a result of changes within Wirral Borough Council, at its AGM on 28th September 2020.

Recommendation

2. That Members:
 - (a) Note the change in political balance of the Authority, as a result of changes within Wirral Borough Council at its AGM on 28th September 2020.
 - (b) As a result of this change, determine the number of seats on each Committee to be allocated to each political group in accordance with the political balance regulations; and
 - (c) Confirm the Members who are to be appointed to Committees, in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group in respect of seats allocated to that group. (A draft Committee Membership Template is attached at Appendix A for Members consideration).

Introduction and Background

3. As a result of changes made within Wirral Borough Council at its AGM on 28th September 2020, there has been a change in the political balance of MFRA.
4. This report confirms the political balance of MFRA for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year, as 14 Labour Members, 3 Liberal Democrat Members and 1 Conservative Member.

5. Based upon the political balance of the Authority, Members are requested to determine the number of seats on each Committee, to be allocated to each political group, in accordance with the political balance regulations.
6. Members are also asked to confirm the Members to be appointed to each Committee, in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group, in respect of the seats allocated to that group.

7. Number of Seats & Political Balance/ Membership of Committees

7.1 The Authority is required to make appointments to its Committees in a manner which, so far as practicable, reflects the political balance of the Authority, unless the Authority has resolved otherwise and no Member has voted against such resolution.

7.2 Following the changes made within Wirral Borough Council at its AGM on 28th September 2020, the representation of each political group on the Authority will be as follows:

Labour	14 Members
Liberal Democrat	3 Members
Conservative	1 Member

7.3 In order to comply with political balance requirements, where practicable, it is appropriate that the proportion of seats on Committees, is allocated to political groups as follows:

Labour	77.78%
Liberal Democrat	16.67%
Conservative	5.55%

8. At its AGM on 11th June 2020, the Authority confirmed the following:
 - (a) The Authority Committee Structure continues to include a Policy and Resources Committee; a Community Safety and Protection Committee, a Scrutiny Committee, an Audit Committee, plus an Appeals Committee and Appointments Committee; and a Member Development and Engagement Group.
 - (b) The Policy & Resources Committee, Community Safety & Protection Committee; and the Scrutiny Committee, will each consist of 9 Members.
 - (c) The “Audit Committee” will consist of 5 Members plus the Independent Person in a non-voting capacity. It will continue to deal with Members Standards issues; and have responsibility for the Statutory Officers Disciplinary Procedure.

9. Given the political proportionality of seats on Committees, for the Policy & Resources Committee, Community Safety & Protection Committee; and the Scrutiny Committee, which each consist of 9 Members, this will result in the proportion of seats allocated to each political group, being as follows:

Labour	7
Liberal Democrat	1.5
Conservative	0.5

10. It is therefore proposed that two of these Committees will consist of 7 Labour Members, plus 2 Liberal Democrat Members, whilst the other Committee will consist of 7 Labour Members, 1 Liberal Democrat Member and 1 Conservative Member.
11. For the Audit Committee, consisting of 5 Members, the proportion of seats allocated to each political group will be as follows:

Labour	4	(3.88)
Liberal Democrat	1	(0.83)
Conservative	0	(0.27)

12. Members are therefore asked to confirm the Members who are to be appointed to each Committee, for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year.
13. In order to assist, a draft Committee Membership Template, has been attached at Appendix A, for Members consideration. This reflects the change in political balance, whilst seeking to maintain the status quo as far as practicable, with regards to the Authority Structure agreed at the AGM in June 2020.

Equality and Diversity Implications

14. There are no equality and/ or diversity implications directly related to this report.

Staff Implications

15. There are no direct staff implications contained within this report.

Legal Implications

16. The Authority is required to ensure that the allocation of seats on each Committee, to each political group, remains in line with the relevant regulations, with regards to political balance; and this report addresses that requirement.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

17. There are no direct financial implications in relation to this report.

Risk Management, Health & Safety, and Environmental Implications

18. There are no direct risk management or health and safety implications in relation to this report.

Contribution to Our Mission: *Safer Stronger Communities – Safe Effective Firefighters*

19. Communities are stronger in the knowledge that the Authority continues to have a structure in place, which is reflective of the electorate of each of its constituent authorities.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
