

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>FULL COUNCIL</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>20 OCTOBER, 2011</b>
<b>TITLE OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>THE COUNCIL'S POLITICAL BALANCE</b>
<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>To review the Council's Political Balance</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>Allocation of seats on the Council's Committees</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Head of Democracy and Legal Department</b>
<b>PORTFOLIO LEADER</b>	<b>Councillor Dyfed W. Edwards</b>

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council must ensure that the constitution of its committees and sub-committees reflects the strength of various political groups on the Council.
- 1.2 The Council is required to do so at least annually as this needs to be done at the Annual Meeting of the Council and in any other meeting of the Council when a change to the political balance occurs.
- 1.3 Since the meeting of the Full Council held on 14 July, 2011 several changes have occurred which have had an effect on the balance between the political groups.
- 1.4 A by-election was held in the Glyder Ward, Bangor on 21 July, 2011 when Councillor Elin Walker Jones was elected as a member of Plaid Cymru on the Council.
- 1.5 At the beginning of August the resignation of Councillor Dewi Lewis, the member for the Penrhyndeudraeth Ward was received.
- 1.6 The by-elections for the Diffwys and Maenofferen Ward, Blaenau Ffestiniog and Penrhyndeudraeth Ward were held on 29 September, 2011 when Councillor Mandy Williams-Davies was elected as a member of the Plaid Cymru Group in the Diffwys and Maenofferen Ward and Councillor Gareth Thomas, also of the Plaid Cymru Group, was elected as a member of the Council in the Penrhyndeudraeth Ward
- 1.7 As a consequence the Plaid Cymru Group has a majority of seats on the Council and the current political constitution is as follows:-

Plaid Cymru	38
Independent	16
Llais Gwynedd	12
Liberal Democrats	4
Labour	4
Individual Member	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>

## 2. ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

- 2.1 In order to remind members, the four main rules included in the Local Government and Housing Act in relation to the allocation of seats are noted here:-
- 2.2 (a) Every seat on a committee cannot be allocated to the same political group;
- (b) The majority of seats on a committee must be allocated to a political group if the number of persons who are members of that group constitute a majority of the Council's members;
- (c) Subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on ordinary committees allocated to each political group will be the same as the number of all seats that members of that group has on the Council;
- (ch) Subject to paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) above, the number of seats on a committee allocated to each political group will be the same proportion of seats on the committee as the number of seats that members of that group has on the Council.
- 2.3 In order to ensure that these rules are adhered to, the Council has been dealing with committees in different blocks in the past. Also, this makes it easier to ensure that rule (c) in paragraph 2.2 above is adhered to.
- 2.4 The Council needs consider the changes to the balance between the political groups when allocating seats on its committees as the Plaid Cymru Group now has the majority of seats on the Council and, therefore, paragraph 2.2(b) is relevant.
- 2.5 The effect of the changes to the political balance on the committee's seats is that the Independent Group gives seats to the Plaid Cymru Group on the Council Board, Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, SACRE Committee, Pensions Committee and one seat on the Planning Committee.
- 2.6 That the Llais Gwynedd Group gives seats to the Plaid Cymru Group on the Principal Scrutiny Committee, Environment Scrutiny Committee, Audit Committee, Employment Appeals Committee and one seat on the Language Sub-committee.
- 2.7 That the Liberal Democrats Group gives a seat on the Pensions Committee to the Plaid Cymru Group.
- 2.8 And that the Labour Group gives a seat on the Joint Planning Policy Committee to the Plaid Cymru Group. (see **Appendix A**)
- 2.9 In accordance with this Council's procedures, the Council's Business Group was asked to discuss the matter at its meeting in order to submit a recommendation to the Full Council.
- 2.10 The Business Group met on 11 October, 2011.
- 2.11 The change to the committee seats was discussed by the Business Group and it was decided to recommend to the Full Council not to change the seats on the committees as only six months is left of the life of the present council.
- 2.12 In order to implement the recommendation of the Business Group it must be accepted by the Council without any member voting against.

### **3. CHAIRPERSONSHIPS AND VICE-CHAIRPERSONSHIPS**

- 3.1 In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Alternative Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2007, it is required to allocate the chairpersonships of committees in order to ensure, as far as practically possible, that the political balance of the authority is reflected in those chairpersonships.
- 3.2 The procedure in this Council is to also allocate the vice-chairpersonships according to political balance and for the Council's Business Group to discuss the arrangements beforehand.
- 3.3 In accordance with rule 6.2 of the Local Authorities (Alternative Arrangements) (Wales) Regulations 2007, no member of the same political group as the Chair of the Board can be the chair or vice-chair of the Principal Scrutiny Committee or chair of the Audit Committee.
- 3.4 The changes to the Council's political balance have had some effect on the chairpersonships and vice-chairpersonships of the main committees with the Plaid Cymru Group gaining one vice-chairpersonship. (see **Appendix B**)
- 3.5 At the meeting of the Business Group held on 11 October, the leaders of the political groups were reminded that the Meirionnydd Area Committee, at its meeting on 11 July 2011, decided to keep its vice-chair empty and, therefore, it would be possible to offer the vice-chairpersonship to the Plaid Cymru Group.
- 3.6 The Business Group agreed to recommend to the Full Council to respect the decision of the Meirionnydd Area Committee and leave the vice-chair vacant.

### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 The Council is asked to:-
- i. not change the allocation of seats on the committees as noted in 2.5 – 2.8 above but to leave the committee membership as it is for the remainder of the present Council
  - ii. respect the decision of the Meirionnydd Area Committee to leave the vice-chairpersonship of the committee vacant and not allocate a vice-chair to the Plaid Cymru Group.

## APPENDIX A

### COUNCIL BOARD AND PRINCIPAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Liberal Democrats	Labour	Ind. Member
Council Board	8	3	2	1	1	
Principal Scrutiny Committee	8	3	2	1	1	

### OTHER SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Liberal Democrats	Labour	Ind. Member
Development	8	3	3	1		
Environment	8	3	2	1	1	
Children and Young People	8	3	3		1	
Care	8	3	2	1	1	

### OTHER COMMITTEES

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Liberal Democrats	Labour	Ind. Member
Audit	8	3	2		1	1
Planning	8	3	2	1	1	
Central Licensing	6	3	2	1		
Employment Appeals	4	1	0	1	1	
Human Resources	6	2	2	1		

<b>Sub total of seats</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>149</b>
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Pensions	4	1	1	0	1	
Local Joint Consultative Committee	6	2	2		1	
Special Education Joint Committee	4	1	1			1
Joint Planning Policy Committee	4	2	1	1	0	
Language	4	2	1			
SACRE	4	1	1	1		
<b>Gain / Lose</b>	<b>+12</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>-5</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>-1</b>	

<b>Total Number of seats</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>196</b>
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## Appendix B

### Apportion Chairpersonships and Vice-Chairpersonships 2011 - 2012

**Chairman of the Council: John Gwilym Jones**

**Vice-Chairman of the Council: R. Leonard Jones**

	<b>Pwyllgor Committee</b>	<b>Cadeirydd Chairperson</b>	<b>Is-gadeirydd Vice-chairperson</b>
1	Bwrdd y Cyngor Council Board	<b>Plaid Cymru Dyfed Wyn Edwards</b>	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>
2	Prif Bwyllgor Craffu Principal Scrutiny Committee	<b>Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Liberal Democrats</b>	<b>Annibynnol / Independent</b>
3	Plant a Phobl Ifanc Children and Young People	<b>Annibynnol / Independent</b>	<b>Llafur / Labour</b>
4	Amgylchedd Environment	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>	<b>Llais Gwynedd</b>
5	Gofal Care	<b>Llais Gwynedd</b>	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>
6	Datblygu Development	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>
7	Archwilio Audit	<b>Annibynnol / Independent</b>	<b>Llais Gwynedd</b>
8	Cynllunio Planning	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>	<b>Llais Gwynedd</b>
9	Trwyddedu Canolog Central Licensing	<b>Annibynnol / Independent</b>	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>
10	Pensiynau Pensions	<b>Llafur / Labour</b>	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>
11	Adnoddau Dynol Human Resources	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>	<b>Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Liberal Democrats</b>
12	Apelau Cyflogaeth Employment Appeals	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>	<b>Annibynnol / Independent</b>
13	Ardal Arfon Arfon Area	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>	<b>Annibynnol / Independent</b>
14	Ardal Dwyfor Dwyfor Area	<b>Llais Gwynedd</b>	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>
15	Ardal Meirionnydd Meirionnydd Area	<b>Plaid Cymru</b>	