

Local Elections and LGA Political Balance 2011-2012

Purpose of report

The Executive is asked to note this report which was considered by the LGA Leadership Board on 18 May.

Summary

Local elections in England took place on 5 May. The LGC Elections Centre at the University of Plymouth has provided the definitive figures for the LG Group's proportionality for 2011-2012. This report sets out the revised proportionality and its implications for the distribution of seats amongst the political groups, on the LG Group's governance structures

Recommendations

That the LG Group Executive notes the report.

Action

Political Groups to agree the allocation of places across all LG Group structures.

Contact Officers: Claire Holloway, Corporate Programme Director
Phone: 0207 664 3156
email: claire.holloway@local.gov.uk

Cathy Boyle, Manager, Member Services
Phone: 0207 664 3205
email: cathy.boyle@local.gov.uk

Local elections and LGA Political Balance 2011-2012

Background

1. The 2011 local elections were held at the same time as the referendum on the alternative vote. Of the 279 English councils affected, 126 districts and 30 unitaries held all out elections, with a further 67 districts, 20 unitaries and 36 metropolitan councils holding elections by thirds. Mayoral elections took place in four authorities. Local elections in Wales will take place in 2012 on an all out basis.
2. The number of Conservative councillors increased by 86 and they gained control of an additional 4 councils. In Northampton the Conservatives took 9 seats from the Liberal Democrats to take control of the council.
3. The Labour Party increased the number of Labour councillors by 857, taking control of Sheffield, Hull, York and Newcastle, along with Stoke-on-Trent, where the BNP lost all their remaining seats.
4. The Liberal Democrats lost control of 9 councils in total, In Stockport, they lost control, but remain the largest party on the council. They retained control in Eastleigh, increasing their majority by 3 seats, and increased their majority in Oadby and Wigston.
5. Independent councillors stood in most councils. In Boston, control moved from the Boston By-pass party to Conservative. In Mansfield and Middlesborough incumbent independent mayors Tony Eggington and Ray Mallon were both re-elected.

LGA proportionality

6. The final figures for 2011-2012, based on data provided by the University of Plymouth are set out below along with the 2010/11 figures. The figures include the effect of the 50% weighting for Welsh authorities, and the respective weightings for two tier areas.

Year	Conservative	Labour	Lib Dem	Ind / other
2011/12	45	32	16	7
2010/11	46	27	20	7

7. Under the LGA Constitution, the largest party appoints the chairman of the Association. The chairman of the Association also chairs the LGA Leadership Board and the LG Group Executive. The remaining Office Holders are appointed according to proportionality. The political balance on each of the

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Association's governance structures is calculated with reference to proportionally and/or by agreement between group leaders.

LGA Leadership Board

8. The LGA Leadership Board is normally made up of 11 members and is balanced proportionally. To most accurately reflect the new political balance, it is recommended that this figure is increased to 12 for 2011/2012. This comprises the chairman plus 4 additional Conservatives, 4 Labour, 2 Liberal Democrat and 1 Independent.

Chairs

9. There are 16 chairs in total covering the nine programme boards, two panels, two central body boards (LG Regulation and Local Partnerships) and the urban, rural and fire commissions. The chairs of the Improvement, Workforce and European & International Programme Boards also chair the company boards of the LGID, LGE and LGIB respectively. The Leadership Centre is excluded because as a registered charity, the Board of Trustees is responsible for electing its chair.

LG Group Executive

10. The LG Group Executive comprises 33 members - the twelve members of the LGA Leadership Board, chairs of the nine programme boards, the chairs of LACORS and Local Partnerships and one representative each from the regional groupings and Wales.

The chairs of the Resources Panel, and three Special Interest Groups (CCN, DCN and SIGOMA) and the chair of the Leadership Centre attend in a non-voting capacity and are not included in the political balance of the Group Executive.

11. In 2010/11 nominations by the regions meant that the LG Group Executive was not politically balanced. In 2011/12 it is recommended that balancing members are appointed to secure political proportionality if necessary.

Programme Boards

12. Each of the nine programme boards has a core membership of 14, including the chair. The Safer & Stronger Communities and Environment & Housing programme boards each include one representative from the LGR company board. The Safer & Stronger Communities programme board includes the chair of the Fire Services Management Committee. The European & International programme board includes one representative from each of the remaining programme boards except Community Wellbeing and Culture, Tourism and Sport, and three representatives from the European bodies.

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Panels

13. The Resources and Audit & Scrutiny Panels each has a core membership of nine members. Audit & Scrutiny includes a representative from the LGID, LGE and LGR boards.

Commissions/Fire Services Management Committee

14. The Fire Services Management Committee has a proportional membership of fifteen drawn from authorities with responsibility for fire & rescue.
15. The LG Group appoints to chairs of the Urban and Rural Commissions only. The remaining vice and deputy chairs are agreed by the commission members.

Table 1 – 2011/12 allocation for each structure

Structure/Year		Cons	Lab	Lib Dem	Ind	Total
Balance 2011/12 %		45	32	16	7	
LGA Leadership Board	2011/12	5	4	2	1	12
	2010/11	5	3	2	1	11
Chairs of boards/panels/ commissions	2011/12	8	5	2	1	16
	2010/11	8	4	3	1	16
LG Group Executive (voting)	2011/12	15	11	5	2	33
	¹ 2010/11	14	11	5	2	32
Programme board members	²2011/12	6	4	2	1	13
	2010/11	6	4	3	1	14
Panel members	2011/12	4	3	1	1	9
	2010/11	4	2	2	1	9
Fire Services Mgt Committee	2011/12	7	5	2	1	15
	2010/11	7	4	3	1	15

¹ Balancing members were not included in the 2010/11 Group Executive

² Under normal rounding up/down conventions, calculations leave one place free on each programme board for negotiation amongst Groups

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Table 2 - Current allocation of chairs and vice chairs (2010/2011)

Structure	Chairs	Vice Chairs
Programme boards		
Children & Young People	Conservative	Labour
Community Well-being	Liberal Democrat	Conservative
Culture Tourism and Sport	Liberal Democrat	Labour
Environment & Housing	Conservative	Labour
Economy & Transport	Labour	Conservative
European & International	Labour	Liberal Democrat
Improvement	Conservative	Liberal Democrat
Safer & Stronger Communities	Labour	Conservative
Workforce	Labour	Liberal Democrat
Panels		
Resources Panel	Conservative	Labour
Audit & Scrutiny Panel	Labour	Liberal Democrat
Company Boards		
LGID (as Improvement PB)	Conservative	Liberal Democrat
LGR	Conservative	Labour
LGE (as Workforce PB)	Labour	Liberal Democrat
Local Partnerships	Liberal Democrat	Independent
Commissions		
Rural Commission	Conservative	N/A
Urban Commission	Independent	N/A
Fire Commission	Conservative	Labour

Conclusion

16. Subject to LGA Leadership Board's endorsement, the political groups will need to begin negotiations to agree the allocation of chairs and vice chairs across the LG Group structures set out in **table 1**, and to populate all places. **Table 2** shows the current allocation of chairs and vice chairs based on existing proportionality.