

## LGA Political Balance 2023/24

### Purpose of Report

For decision.

### Summary

Local government elections took place on Thursday 4 May 2023 in England.

Following the election results, the definitive figures for the LGA's proportionality for 2023/24 have been confirmed. This report sets out the revised proportionality and its implications for the distribution of seats amongst the political groups on the LGA's governance structures.

**LGA Plan Theme:** One politically led organisation

### Recommendation

**That the Board notes the proportionality figures for 2023/24 meeting year.**

### Contact details

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## LGA Political Balance 2023/24

### Background

1. The 2023 local government elections took place on Thursday 4 May 2023. There were over 8,000 seats being contested in England, which was nearly half of all councillors in the country. Around 27 million electors had the opportunity to vote, which equated to about 70 per cent of the English electorate.
2. Local government elections were held in:
  - 152 District authorities
  - 46 Unitary authorities
  - 32 Metropolitan districts
3. There were also elections for Mayors in Bedford, Leicester, Mansfield and Middlesbrough.

### LGA Proportionality

4. Under the LGA's Articles of Association (clause 8.1), political balance, or proportionality, is calculated annually immediately after the last principal elections of Member Authorities.
5. The final figures for 2023/24, based on data provided by Professors Rallings and Thrasher are set out below along with the 2022/23 figures for comparison. The total of any percentages in a row may add to greater than 100% due to rounding at that stage.

	Labour %	Conservative %	Lib Dem %	Ind %
<b>2023/24</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>12.6</b>
2022/23	35.9	38.2	13.2	12.7

6. Under the LGA Articles of Association, the largest group appoints the Chair of the Association. For 2023/24, the Labour Group takes the LGA Chair by 4.9 percentage points. The LGA Chair also chairs the LGA Board, the Executive Advisory Board and the Councillors' Forum. The remaining Office Holders are appointed according to proportionality. Under the Articles, the Senior Vice-Chair of the LGA is the leader of the second largest group, which for 2023/24 is the Conservative Group.
7. Once the LGA's overall political balance has been calculated, the result is applied to each of our political structures to determine their make-up. Mathematical rounding is applied to allocate available seats to match each Political Group's proportionality.

Figures are calculated to one decimal place and any group whose balance is above 0.5 is rounded up and below 0.5 rounded down. An exception is where adopting this approach would have the effect of increasing the size of the board or committee. In that instance, the group with the smallest amount above 0.5 is rounded down. In all cases, every Political Group will be entitled to at least one seat on each policy board to reflect the cross-party nature of the LGA.

8. The four-member Audit Committee, Commercial Advisory Board, LGA Commercial Services Ltd, and Property Company Boards are not included in the LGA's political balance but are represented by one member from each of the political groups.
9. The revised breakdowns are set out in **Appendix A**.

### LGA Board

10. This year the LGA Board comprises a core group of ten places, made up of the Chairman, four Vice-Chairs (the LGA's Group Leaders) and five Deputy Chairs. As in recent years, one additional place has been allocated to each group giving a Board comprising five Conservatives, five Labour, two Liberal Democrats and two Independents.

LGA Board	Places	Lab	Cons	Lib Dem	Ind	Total
<b>2023/24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b> (5.4)	<b>5</b> (4.7)	<b>2</b> (2.1)	<b>2</b> (1.8)	<b>14</b>
2022/23	14	5	5	2	2	14

### Chairs

11. The LGA's nine policy Boards, together with the Fire Services Management Committee, gives a total of ten Chairs. Divided according to proportionality this gives the Conservative group 3 Chairs, the Labour group 4 Chairs, the Liberal Democrat group 2 Chairs and the Independent group 1 Chair.

Chairs	Places	Lab	Cons	Lib Dem	Ind
<b>Political Balance 2023/24</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b> (3.9)	<b>3</b> (3.4)	<b>2</b> (1.5)	<b>1</b> (1.3)
Political Balance 2022/23	10	4	4	1	1

### Vice-Chairs

12. The LGA's nine policy Boards, together with the Fire Services Management Committee, each have a Vice-Chair. The City Regions and People & Places Boards have an

additional Vice-Chair drawn from the same group as the Chair. This gives a total of 12 Vice-Chairs.

Vice Chairs	Places	Lab	Cons	Lib Dem	Ind
<b>Political Balance 2023/24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b> (4.6)	<b>4</b> (4.1)	<b>2*</b> (1.8)	<b>1*</b> (1.5)
Political Balance 2022/23	12	4	5	2	1

### Executive Advisory Board

13. Core membership of the Executive Advisory Board comprises the LGA Board, the Chairs of the nine Boards and representatives of the nine English regions and Wales. The core membership of the Executive is 32 (14 LGA Board Members, 9 Board Chairs, and 9 regional representatives).
14. Under the LGA Articles of Association, regional and Welsh appointments to the Executive are encouraged to be made from the largest group. The Executive Advisory Board balance will be calculated when once the regional nominations are confirmed in August. If required, Groups may either appoint additional members as balancing members, or allocate additional voting rights to existing members to achieve the balance.

### Policy Boards

15. The seven policy boards have a proportionate membership of 18, including the Chair:
  - 15.1. Children & Young People
  - 15.2. Community Wellbeing
  - 15.3. Culture, Tourism & Sport
  - 15.4. Environment, Economy, Housing & Transport
  - 15.5. Improvement & Innovation
  - 15.6. Resources
  - 15.7. Safer & Stronger Communities
16. In 2023/24, the strict application of the political balance to the seven 18 Member policy boards provides the following number of places to each Group:

Policy Boards	Places	Lab	Cons	Lib Dem	Ind
<b>Political Balance 2023/24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b> (7.0)	<b>6</b> (6.1)	<b>3</b> (2.7)	<b>2</b> (2.3)
Political Balance 2022/23	18	7	7	2	2

### City Regions and People & Places Boards

17. The City Regions and People & Places Boards were established in February 2014. The make-up of these Boards reflects the political proportionality of the wider group of

councils from which their membership is drawn and each has an additional Deputy Chair drawn from the same group as the Chair. The political balance of these Boards is included in full in Appendix A.

### Fire Services Management Committee and Fire Commission

18. The Fire Services Management Committee membership of 14 is drawn from authorities with responsibility for fire & rescue.

FSMC	Places	Lab	Cons	Lib Dem	Ind
2023/24	14	5	5	2	2
2022/23	14	5	5	2	2

19. All fire authorities in full or corporate membership of the Local Government Association appoint to the Fire Commission, with additional balancing members then appointed by the Political Group Office to reflect the LGA's overall political balance. This process is conducted separately in early autumn.

### Implications for Wales

21. Welsh authorities in associate membership are included in the proportionality calculations as set out above.

### Financial Implications

22. There are no unbudgeted costs for the LGA.

### Equalities implications

23. There are no equalities implications at this stage of the proportionality and political balance process.

### Next steps

24. The political balance for the LGA Board will come into effect from the next meeting of the General Assembly. The political balance for the remaining governance structures will come into effect from 1 September, with an appointments process undertaken by the Political Groups over the summer.