

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & ALL-MEMBER MEETING**



Date: 11 July 2013

Subject: **Political Balance on SEEC Executive following May 2013 Local Elections**

Report of: Cllr Paul Watkins, SEEC Secretary & Treasurer

Recommendations:

- i) Members note the results of the May 2013 local election results and the implications for allocation of seats by political party on the SEEC Executive.
- ii) Members consider the options for the 2 'smaller party' Executive seats if there is no interest in an alliance between two or more smaller parties.

1. Determining political balance on SEEC's Executive

- 1.1 SEEC's constitution sets out a formula for allocating seats on the SEEC Executive to political parties in proportion to the percentage of the vote that each party receives across the 74 South East local authorities. This means seat allocation reflects the share of votes cast for each political party, rather than the number of councils controlled by each party.
- 1.2 The constitution also specifies a minimum threshold, whereby Executive seats are only allocated to parties who return more than 5% of total councillors across the South East.
- 1.3 The template for Executive seats has been recalculated to reflect the results of local elections on 2 May 2013. Allocations are rounded to the nearest whole number to determine the Executive places for each party.
- 1.4 The 2013 elections saw the percentage of votes for smaller political parties more than double from 5.84% last year to 11.8% this year. A single party receiving this proportion of the vote would secure 2 seats on the SEEC Executive. However the votes are split between a number of smaller parties and none of these parties individually meets the '5% of councillors' threshold to qualify for Executive seats in their own right.

	Con	LibDem	Lab	Ind	Residents	UKIP	Green	SDP/Respect	Total
N ^o Cllrs	2263	538	438	132	87	71	38	2	3569
% Cllrs	63.4	15.1	12.3	3.7	2.4	1.99	1.1	0.05	100%
% of vote	59.2	15.0	14.0	3.4	1.8	4.7	1.9	0.03	100%
Share of 19 SEEC Executive seats (rounded to nearest whole number):									
	11	3	3	Combined share of vote = 2 but no party alone meets threshold of 5% of councillors					19

- 1.5 In the case of a formal alliance between two or more of the smaller parties it would be possible to allocate 2 Executive seats to a cross-party alliance which represents more than 5% of the total councillors in the South East. Allied parties could then jointly nominate 2 councillors to represent their collective interests on SEEC Executive. Nominated councillors would have to be drawn from a SEEC member authority.

- 1.6 SEEC secretariat has written to four leading councillors in member authorities who represent the Independent, Residents, UKIP and Green parties setting out the position. They have been asked to indicate – before today’s AGM – whether they are interested in exploring a cross-party alliance.
- 1.7 If there is no interest in a cross-party alliance to claim the 2 available Executive seats, members should consider whether they wish to keep these seats vacant or reallocate them between the Conservative, Lib-Dem and Labour parties in line with the percentage share of the vote for each party.
- 1.8. The new template for seat allocations comes into immediate effect for today’s SEEC Executive Committee elections.