

**Report for:** Full Council 14<sup>th</sup> of March

**Title:** **Change to Political Composition and Appointments to Committees 2021/22**

**Authorised by:** Fiona Alderman, Head of Legal and Governance & Monitoring Officer

**Lead Officer:** Ayshe Simsek Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager  
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**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report for Key/  
Non-Key Decision:** Non-Key Decision

### **1. Describe the issue under consideration.**

- To note the changes to the political groups as notified to the Chief Executive.
- To agree a change to the Committee Memberships.

### **2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

N/A

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 Council is asked to:
1. Note the changes to the political composition set out at paragraph 4.3.
  2. To agree the resultant changes to Council Committee memberships as detailed in paragraphs 4.5 and 4.8.

### **4. Background information**

- 4.1 On the 22 of February , the Chief Executive was informed by Cllr Gideon Bull in writing that he no longer wished to be treated as a member of the Labour group; This was in accordance with Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 – 10b.
- 4.2 Cllr Gideon Bull further notified the Chief Executive of his resignation from the Staffing and Remuneration Committee, Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel, and Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel.
- 4.3 The political balance of the Council of 57 councillors is now as follows:

Labour	40 councillors (70.2%)
Liberal Democrats	15 councillors (26.3%)
Independent	1 Councillor (1.75%)
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- 4.4 The Council is required to ensure that appointments to which the statutory political balance rules apply are made in accordance with those rules. The relevant rules are summarised below (see paragraph ). The Annual Meeting of the Council appoints Committees of the Council in accordance with Article 4.02(k) of the Constitution. The Council is required to comply with the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 in terms of political balance when appointing 'ordinary' committees – that is, committees appointed under section 102(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972.

These rules provide that seats on 'ordinary' committees must be allocated in line with the following principles, so far as reasonably practicable:

- (a) that not all the seats on a body are allocated to the same political group;
  - (b) that the majority of the seats on the body are allocated to the political group which has the majority of the Council's membership;
  - (c) that, subject to principles (a) and (b) above, the proportion of seats allocated to each political group out of the total number of seats across all the ordinary committees of the Council shall be in the same proportion as their share of membership of the Council as a whole; and
  - (d) that, subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, the number of seats on each individual body shall be allocated to each political group in the same proportion as their share of membership of the Council as a whole.
- 4.5 The Independent Member could not remain on the Staffing and Remuneration Committee as this has a Council Member membership of with 4 Labour Members and 1 Liberal Democrat Member and would mean that compliance with rule 4.4(d) was not possible. The Labour group have advised on the nomination of Cllr Reg Rice to the Staffing and Remuneration Committee for Full Council agreement, giving effect to the wishes of the Labour group.
- 4.6 The number of seats currently available on all Ordinary Committees is 56. Keeping to the current seat allocation of 41 Labour and 15 Liberal Democrat would mean that Labour has **73.2%** of the total number of seats and this is **3% percent** higher percentage share, and the Liberal Democrats would have **26.8%** percentage allocation which is 0.5% higher percentage share.
- 4.7 Reducing the Labour group allocation by 1 seat and allocating a seat on the Licensing Committee to the Liberal Democrat Group would mean that in consequence, Labour would receive 40 Committee seats (71.4% of the total number of seats available) and Liberal Democrats 16 seats (28.6% of the total number). The Liberal Democrat group would therefore have a percentage of Committee seats that is 2.3% higher than their percentage share of the total number of councillors and Labour group would have share that is 1.2% higher than their share. This allows a closer percentage allocation to the overall political balance allocations, and the Council is complying with the principle set out at paragraph 4.4(c) above, so far as reasonably practicable.

- 4.8 The political groups have indicated that Cllr Bob Hare will replace Cllr Reg Rice on the Licensing Committee until the end of the municipal year 2021/2022.
- 4.9 In calculating the allocation of seats on ordinary committees, the following bodies were excluded because these bodies are excluded from the statutory rules on political balance:
- The Cabinet.
  - The disciplinary pool.
  - Licensing Sub-Committees (Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Committee).
  - The Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 4.10 Changes to appointments can be made at any stage during the Municipal Year with the changes being reported to the Council as appropriate.

## **5. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities) Finance and Procurement**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report.
- ### **Head of Legal and Governance & Monitoring Officer**
- 5.2 The report sets out those Council bodies to which the political balance rules apply. The 1989 Act requires political balance in the distribution of seats on committees to be undertaken "so far as is reasonably practicable" thus recognising that a mathematically precise split between political parties cannot always be achieved.
- 5.3 In section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, principle (b) states that a party with a majority on full Council shall have a majority of seats on each individual body. This principle takes precedence over principles (c) and (d) which require political groups to be represented on the ordinary committees taken as a whole and on the bodies individually in proportion to their representation on Full Council.
- 5.4 Principle (c) concerning proportionate allocation of seats across all the ordinary committees of the council takes precedence over the principle (d) concerning proportionate allocation on any individual body.
- 5.5 There is no requirement to offer a seat to a single member as they do not constitute a "political group" under the definition in the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (S.I. 1553) Regulation 8.

## **6. Use of Appendices**

**None**

## **7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

- 7.1 Background documents:
- *Appointments to Cttees 2021- 22*
  - *Haringey Council's Constitution*

- 7.2 The background papers are located at River Park House, 225 High Road, Wood Green, London N22 8HQ.
- 7.3 To inspect them or to discuss this report further, please contact Ayshe Simsek on 0208 489 2929.