



Haringey Council

Agenda item: **6**

Council

on **19 October 2009**

Report Title: **Changes to Appointments to Committees and consideration to waiving Council Procedure Rule 9 (Questions).**

Forward Plan reference number (if applicable): n/a

Report of: **Chief Executive**

Wards(s) affected:

Report for: Non key decision.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To agree changes to Committee memberships.
- 1.2 To consider waiving Council Procedure Rule 9.5 (a) to permit an oral question from the Conservative Member.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the change to Council body membership as detailed in paragraph 8.1 be agreed.
- 2.2 That consideration be given to waiving Council Procedure Rule 9.5 (a) to permit an oral question from the Conservative Member.

Report Authorised by: **Chief Executive**

Contact Officer: **Ken Pryor, Deputy Head of Local Democracy and Member Services**
Tel: **0208 489 2915**

3. Chief Financial Officer Comments

3.1 The Chief Financial Officer comments that the changes detailed in this report will have no direct financial implications.

4. Head of Legal Services Comments

4.1 There must be two or more Members to constitute a “political group”.

4.2 The Council’s standing orders at S.O. 9 allow individual members to ask both oral and written questions at a Council meeting. The reference at S.O> 9.5 (a) to “groups” was included for the purposes of fairly regulating the asking of oral questions at the meeting. It was not included with the intention of denying the right of an individual member not part of a political group to ask an oral question. Because this standing order does, whatever its intention, limit the asking of oral questions to those members in political groups, a vote to suspend standing orders in this respect alone would be necessary if a question from the individual member were to be taken.

5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Background papers

5.1 Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

5.2 Local Government Act 2000.

5.3 Report to Annual Council on Committee Appointments

The background papers are located at River Park House, 225 High Road, Wood Green, London N22 8HQ.

To inspect them or to discuss this report further, please contact Ken Pryor on 0208 489 2915.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no perceived financial implications arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to ensure there is political balance on its Committees.

8. Background

8.1 The Liberal Democrat Group have notified the following committee changes:

- Councillor Alexander to replace Councillor Davies on General Purposes Committee.

- 8.2 Changes to the political composition of the Council were reported to the meeting on 20 July 2009. Arising from these changes a request has been received from Councillor Dobbie that he be permitted to ask an oral question at the Council meeting.
- 8.3 Council Procedure Rule 9.5(a) stipulates the following in relation to oral questions:
- (a) There will be 8 questions which will receive oral answers. All other questions will receive written answers. Questions from each group will be placed so as to alternate on the agenda with 4 from each political party. 3 minutes will be allocated to answer the main question and 2 minutes allocated to answer supplementary questions.
- 8.4 If the Council is agreeable to allowing a question from the Conservative Councillor, it will be necessary to suspend CPR 9.5(a) to permit a question from a Councillor who is not part of a "Group". If this is agreed it is also proposed that the restriction to 8 oral questions be raised to 9 in order not to disadvantage existing Political Groups.
- 8.5 All other aspects of CPR 9 will remain in place until further reviewed by the Constitution Review Working Group.
- 8.6 Changes to appointments can be made at any stage during the Municipal Year with the changes being reported to the Council as appropriate.