

**3Report for:** Annual Council 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2025

**Title:** **Political composition and Appointments to Committees 2025/2026**

**Authorised by:** Fiona Alderman, Assistant Director for Legal and Governance & Monitoring Officer

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**Ward(s) affected:** All

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

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

- 1.1 Council is asked to note the change in the political composition of the Council following the resignation of Councillor Tammy Hymas on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2025 and the election of Councillor Ruairidh Paton on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2025.
- 1.2 This report further concerns the appointment of councillors to serve on Committees during the municipal year 2025/26. 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 4.4). This report also sets out the membership of the Cabinet (which is excluded from the statutory rules about political balance), for the Council to note.
- 1.2 A schedule of Committees is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. This details the number of seats available on each Committee and the proportional split between the parties (reflecting the political balance of the authority, in accordance with the rules summarised at paragraph 4.4).

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

N/A

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 Council is asked to:
1. Note the political composition set out at paragraph 4.2.
  2. Appoint to the Committees on the "slate" basis.
  3. To agree the allocation of seats on Committees and appointments in accordance with paragraphs 4.8 to 4.9.

4. To agree the membership of Committees and the appointment of Chairs as detailed at Appendix 1 giving effect to the wishes of the political groups.
5. To note the proposed membership of the Cabinet as detailed at Appendix 2 appointed by the Leader in accordance with Article 7 paragraph 7.05 ii of the Council Constitution.

#### **4. Background information**

4.1 On the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2025, Councillor Hymas, of St Ann's Ward, confirmed in writing her resignation as an elected member of the Council. There followed a by election and Councillor Ruairidh Paton of the Green Party was elected as a Council Member on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2025.

4.2 The political balance of the Council of 57 councillors is as follows:

|                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Labour                 | 45 councillors (78.96 %) |
| Liberal Democrats      | 7 councillors (12.28%)   |
| Independent Socialists | 3 Councillor (5.26%)     |
| Independent            | 1 Councillor (1.75%)     |
| Green Party            | 1 Councillor (1.75%)     |

4.3 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 4.4). 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.

4.4 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 number of seats currently available on Ordinary Committees is 61.

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| Alexandra Park and Palace Board -              | 6 seats  |
| Audit Committee                                | 7 seats  |
| General Purposes Committee                     | 5 seats  |
| Licensing Committee                            | 11 seats |
| Pensions Committee and Board                   | 6 seats  |
| Strategic Planning Committee                   | 11 seats |
| Standards Committee                            | 5 seats  |
| Appointments Panel                             | 5 seats  |
| Disciplinary, Grievance<br>and Dismissal Panel | 5 seats  |
| Total  | 61 seats |

4.6 As set out on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2024 report on Appointments to Committees ,**49** seats (80.33%) were allocated to the Labour Group, **9 seats** (14.75%) were allocated to the Liberal Democrat Group and **3** seats (4.92%) allocated to the Independent Socialist Group. This met the requirements of the 1989 Act on proportionality as closely as possible.

4.7 Following the by election result of the 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2025, and small change to the political proportionality of the majority group, there has been consideration of the seat allocation. The table below sets out the current allocations for reference.

| Ordinary Committee              | Labour | Liberal Democrat | Independent Socialists | Total number of seats |
|---------------------------------|--------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Alexandra Park and Palace Board | 5      | 1                | 0                      | 6                     |
| Audit Committee                 | 5      | 1                | 1                      | 7                     |
| General Purposes Committee      | 4      | 1                | 0                      | 5                     |

|   |    |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|----|
| Licensing Committee                         | 9  | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| Pensions Committee and Board                | 5  | 1 | 0 | 6  |
| Strategic Planning Committee                | 9  | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| Standards Committee                         | 4  | 1 | 0 | 5  |
| Appointments Panel                          | 4  | 1 | 0 | 5  |
| Disciplinary, Grievance and Dismissal Panel | 4  | 1 | 0 | 5  |
|   | 49 | 9 | 3 | 61 |

4.8 It is noted that following the election of Green Party Councillor Ruairidh Paton, 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. Therefore, seat allocation has been compiled taking account the three political groups, and the following options were considered:

### Option 1

To allocate the Labour group 48 seats (78.69%) and the Liberal Democrat group 10 seats (16.39%) would mean that the Labour group would have 0.27% lower percentage allocation than their Council membership and the Liberal Democrat group would have a 4.11% higher allocation than their Council membership percentage allocation. Although, this would meet principles (a) and (b) of the 1989 Act on proportionality it would not meet principles (c) and (d). This is because there would be a Committee in which the Liberal Democrat Group would have a much higher proportion of seats according to their proportion of the Council i.e. Strategic Planning 2 Liberal Democrat members (22%) of the share of seats or Pensions Committee and Board (33%) of the share of seats.

### Option 2

Providing the independent Socialist group with 4 seats (6.55%) and Labour 48 seats (78.69%) and Liberal Democrat group 9 seats would mean that the independent Socialist group would have a 1.29% higher proportion of seats than their Council membership and Labour would have a 0.27% lower percentage share and similarly

to option 1 the Independent Socialist Group would have a higher proportion of seats on individual Committees and not meet 1989 Act on proportionality principles (c) and (d).

### **Option 3**

Keeping to the existing allocation of 49 seats (80.33%) to the Labour group and 9(14.75%) seats allocation to the Liberal Democrat group and 3 seats (4.92%) allocated to the Independent Socialist Group, means that group allocations of seats more closely meets the Council membership allocations set out at 4.4 and the 1989 Act on proportionality principles (a) (b) (c) and (d).

4.9 Therefore, option 3 is recommended.

4.10 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.
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### **The Cabinet**

4.11 The Cabinet is appointed by the Leader and may only comprise councillors from the majority party. It must have between 2 and 9 members in addition to the Leader.

### **Licensing Sub-Committees (Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Committee).**

4.12 The Licensing Committee establishes the Licensing Sub-Committee of 3 members which will be appointed from a pool of members from the Licensing Committee. The Sub-Committee conducts the same type of business which includes the Gambling Act 2005 applications. The political balance rules do not apply to the Licensing Sub-Committees because they are appointed under the Licensing Act 2003 and so are not ordinary committees appointed under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972. However, it is normal practice to establish the Licensing Sub-Committee in accordance with political balance (that is, two Labour and one Liberal Democrat Member) so far as reasonably practicable.

### **The Health and Wellbeing Board**

4.13 The political balance rules are disapplied by the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 (SI 2013/218). Membership of the Health and Wellbeing Board is prescribed at section 194 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 4.14 Principles (a), (b) and (d) of the rules apply to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by virtue of section 9FA(6)(b) of the Local Government Act 2000. However, because the Committee is established under the Local Government Act 2000, it is not an ordinary committee appointed under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 and so it is not included in the political balance calculations for the total number of seats on ordinary committees (principle c). As such, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must be balanced, but on an individual basis.
- 4.15 In view of the volume of appointments to be made it is expedient to approve the appointments on a "slate" basis, rather than on an individual basis, as set out in Appendix 1.
- 4.16 Changes to appointments can be made at any stage during the municipal Year with the changes being reported to the Council as appropriate.
- 4.17 As set out in paragraph 1.2 of Part Three Section C of the Council's Constitution, the Leader selects the Members of the Council's Cabinet. The Leader has made the appointments that are set out at Appendix 2 for the Council to note.
- 4.18 To note that the appointment of the Vice Chair for the Pensions Committee and Board will also be confirmed at their first meeting of the municipal year and there will be a constitutional review in 2025/26 of the provision for appointment of this position.

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

- 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**

### **Appendix 1 - Appointments to Committees 2025/26**

### **Appendix 2 - Cabinet Member portfolios 2025/26**

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

### **7.1 Background documents:**

- *Appointments to Cttees 2024-25*
- *Haringey Council's Constitution*

### **7.2 The background papers are located at George Meehan House 294 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.**