

Report for: Full Council 21st of July 2025

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

Authorised by: Fiona Alderman, 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 balance of the Council following the notification of a new constituted Political Group, the Green Socialist Alliance.
- 1.2 The Council is asked to agree the subsequent changes to ordinary Committees membership and composition as a result of the above and consider the reasoning set out at section 4 of this report.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Council is asked to:
1. Note the changes to the political balance of the Council set out at paragraph 4.3.
 2. To note the formation and membership of the Green Socialist Alliance set out at section 4.
 3. To agree that Councillor Paton will replace Councillor Dogan on the General Purposes Committee, giving effect to the wishes of the Political Group, and in accordance with paragraphs 4.10, 4.14 and 4.15.
 4. To note that Councillor Collett will continue on the Strategic Planning Committee as a member of the Green Socialist Alliance, giving effect to the wishes of the Political Group.
 5. To note that Councillor Mark Blake will continue on the Licensing Committee as a member of the Green Socialist Alliance, giving effect to the wishes of the Political Group.
 6. To note that Councillor Mason will continue on the Audit Committee as a member of the Green Socialist Alliance, giving effect to the wishes of the Political Group.

4. Background information

4.1 To note that on the 27th of June , Councillor Mark Blake notified the: Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services Manager and Chief Executive in writing that he no longer wished to be treated as a Member of the Independent Socialist Group and wished to be treated as a Green Party Member; This was in accordance with Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 –reg. 10(b).

4.2 On the 4th of July 2025, the Proper Officer was notified of the formation of a new Political Group, named the Green Socialist Alliance. The Leader of the Group was notified a Councillor Lotte Collett, and the Deputy Leader was notified as Councillor Mark Blake. The further group members were notified as Councillor Mason and Councillor Paton. This notification was received in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 - reg.8(1) 'Constitution of Political Groups', which advises that a political Group shall be treated as constituted when there is delivered to the proper officer a notice in writing which is signed by two or more members of the authority who wish to be treated as a political Group, and complied with the provisions of paragraph (3) as it set out the Leader and Deputy Leader and was signed by the Group Members.

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

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Labour | 45 councillors (78.95 %) |
| Liberal Democrats | 7 councillors (12.28%) |
| Green Socialist Alliance. | 4 Councillor (7.02%) |
| Independent | 1 Councillor (1.75%) |

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 4.5). 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.

4.5 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.

4.6 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 and Dismissal Panel | 5 seats |
| Total | 61 seats |

4.7 As set out on the 19th of May 2025 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 Local Government and Housing Act 1989 Act on proportionality as closely as possible.

4.8 Following the merger of the Independent Socialist Group and Green Party members to form a new political Group, Green Socialist Alliance, and subsequent increase in the percentage proportional membership of the second opposition group, there is a need to consider the Committee composition on Ordinary Committees of the Council, taking account of the principles of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 set out at paragraph 4.5.

4.9 The seat allocation has been compiled taking account the three political Groups, and the following options were considered:

4.10 Option 1 – (48 seats to Labour, 9 to Liberal Democrat and 4 to Green Socialist Alliance)

To allocate the Labour Group 48 seats ($48/61 \times 100 = 78.69\%$), the Liberal Democrat Group with 9 seats ($9/61 \times 100 = 14.75\%$) and providing the Green Socialist Alliance with 4 seats ($4/61 \times 100 = 6.56\%$) would mean that the Green Socialist Alliance Group would have a 0.46 percent lower proportion of seats than their Council membership($7.02 - 6.56 = 0.46\%$) and Labour would have a 0.26% lower percentage($78.95 - 78.69 = 0.26\%$)and the Liberal Democrat Group would have a 2.47% ($14.75 - 12.28 = 2.47\%$) higher allocation. In this calculation the Labour Group has a closer percentage allocation of seats to their political share of the Council than the Green Socialist Alliance. Therefore, this would closely meet the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 principles (a), (b), and (c).

4.11 Option 2(49 seats to Labour, 9 seats to Liberal Democrat Group and 3 seats to Green Socialist Alliance)

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 **having 3 seats (4.92%) allocated to the Green Socialist Alliance**, means that the Labour Group have a 1.38% higher allocation($80.33 - 78.95 = 1.38$), the Liberal Democrat Group have a 2.47% higher allocation($14.75 - 12.28 = 2.47$) and the Green Socialist Alliance have a 2.1%($7.02 - 4.92 = 2.1$) lower allocation, and this does not closely meet the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 principle (c).

4.12 Option 3 (49 seats to Labour, 8 seats to Liberal Democrat Group and 4 seats to Green Socialist Alliance)

Keeping to the existing allocation of 49 seats (80.33%) to the Labour Group, and allocating 8 (13.11%) seats allocation to the Liberal Democrat Group and having 4 seats (6.56%) allocated to the Green Socialist Alliance, means that the Labour Group have a 1.38% higher allocation, the Liberal Democrat Group have a 0.83% higher allocation and the Green Socialist Alliance have a 0.46% percent lower allocation, although this would meet Local Government and Housing Act 1989 principles (a) and (b) and (c), it would not meet principle (d) as the Council has 9 ordinary Committees and to not place a Liberal Democrat Councillor on one Committee would mean that there was a Committee without Liberal Democrat representation and would not meet Local Government and Housing Act 1989 principle (d).

4.13 To note that allocating the Green Socialist Alliance two seats on the Licensing Committee would not meet principle (d) as they would have a higher proportion of seats compared to their number of members on the Council.

4.14 Therefore, Option 1 is proposed as this more closely meets Local Government and Housing Act 1989 principles (a), (b), (c). It is proposed allocating the Green Socialist Alliance a seat a on the General Purposes Committee which has a total 5 seats. This would mean that they have 20% of the seats and a higher percentage their proportion of members on the Council. However, this is not

an uncommon consequence when allocating seats to smaller political groups, particularly on Committees with fewer members. A seat on the Alexandra Palace and Park Board is not proposed as membership of this Board also entails becoming a trustee of Alexandra Palace and Park and involves significant duties and obligations under charity and trust law. The annual direction provided from the Chief Executive of the Charitable Trust is that the Council avoids changing their representative members to provide continuity and experience.

4.15 Further to discussions, it is proposed that Councillor Paton replaces Cllr Dogan on the General Purposes Committee as set out at Appendix 1.

| Ordinary Committee | Labour | Liberal Democrat | Green Socialist Alliance | Total number of seats |
|---|--------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Alexandra Park and Palace Board | 5 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Audit Committee | 5 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| General Purposes Committee | 3 | 1 | 1 | 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 |
| | 48 | 9 | 4 | 61 |

4.16 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

4.17 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).

4.18 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

4.19 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

4.20 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.

4.21 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

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the report.

Director 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

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.