



Haringey Council

Agenda item:

Council

on 4 April 2011

Report Title: **Changes to Political Groups, Appointments to Committees & Sub Bodies.**

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 note the changes to Political Groups as notified to the Chief Executive.
- 1.2 To agree changes to Committee memberships.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the changes to Political Group composition as detailed in paragraphs 8.1 & 8.2 be noted.
- 2.2 That the resultant changes to Council body memberships as detailed in paragraphs 8.7 & 8.8 be agreed.

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 has been consulted on this report and has no further specific comment to make given that the other changes detailed will have no direct financial implications.

4. Head of Legal Services Comments

- 4.1 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.

4.2 The rules in section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 require that a party with a majority on full Council shall have a majority of seats on each non-executive body and this rule takes precedence over the rules requiring an exact political balance on those bodies individually and taken as a whole.

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 changes to Member allowances or to Special Responsibility Allowances 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 non-executive Committees so far as reasonably practicable.

8. Background

8.1 The Chief Executive was notified on 1 April 2011 of a change to Political Groups within Haringey. With effect from that date Councillor Adje would serve as an “Independent Labour” member for the White Hart Lane Ward for the rest of his term of office and until further notice.

8.2 The Annual Meeting appoints Committees of the Council. Wherever possible bodies are constituted in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in terms of political balance. Resulting from Councillor Adje resigning from the Labour Group and becoming an Independent Councillor, Labour Councillors now constitute 57.89% of the available seats on the Council; Liberal Democrat Councillors occupy 38.59%, and the Independent Members occupy the remaining 3.51% of seats. Where practicable the allocation of seats on Committees should be in line with the proportion of seats on the Council held by the political groups. The rule about proportionate allocation of seats on bodies overall takes precedence over the rule

about proportionate allocation on any individual body.

- 8.3 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.
- 8.4 In calculating the allocation of seats on Committees, the following bodies were excluded:
 - the Cabinet and its subordinate bodies
 - the disciplinary pool
 - Licensing Committee
 - the Standards Committee and
 - other Committees where membership is determined on the basis of electoral ward represented (eg. Area Assemblies)
- 8.5 With the advent of Independent members, the ability to achieve a precise balance is more difficult.
- 8.6 The number of seats available on Committees and Sub-Committees as agreed by Council on 24 May 2010 was 67. Of this number 39 or 58.21% are allocated to the Labour Group and 28 or 41.79% to the Liberal Democrat Group.
- 8.7 The Labour Group will need to consider who will be appointed as vice chair of Pensions Committee and chair of Miscellaneous Functions Sub-Committee.
- 8.8 Councillor Adje will now be shown as an Independent member on the Northumberland Park and White Hart Lane Area Assembly membership.
- 8.9 Changes to appointments can be made at any stage during the Municipal Year with the changes being reported to the Council as appropriate.