



**Haringey** Council

Agenda item:

**Council**

**on 26 November 2007**

Report Title: **Changes to Political Groups and Appointments to Committees and 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 membership numbers resulting for the recent changes in political group composition.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the changes to Political Group composition as detailed in paragraph 8.1 be noted.
- 2.2 That the membership of the General Purposes Committee be reduced by one Liberal Democrat position in order to reflect their overall number of seats on the Council.
- 2.3 That the resultant changes to Council body memberships as detailed in paragraphs 8.5 & 8.6 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 changes recommended in this report 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.

### **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 Chief Executive was notified on Friday 2 November 2007 of a change to Political Groups within Haringey. With effect from 10 am on that date, Councillor Catherine Harris ceased to be a member of the Liberal Democrat Group and became a member of the Labour Party and Labour Group.

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 Catherine Harris resigning the Liberal Democrat whip and joining the Labour Group, it was necessary to recalculate proportionality across Committees. Labour Councillors now

constitute 54.39% of the available seats on the Council; the Liberal Democrats occupy the remaining 45.61% of the 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.

- 8.3 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)
- 8.4 It is proposed that the number of seats available on Committees and Sub-Committees, as agreed at the Annual Meeting, be reduced by one and that General Purposes Committee be now based on a membership of 7 with a 4/3 split to the Labour Group. All other membership numbers would remain unchanged. On this basis a total of 63 seats were available on Committees and Sub-Committees; 34 or 53.97% were allocated to the Labour Group and 29 or 46.03% to the Liberal Democrat Group.
- 8.5 The Liberal Democrat Group have advised that their membership for General Purposes Committee will now be Councillors Bloch, Beynon and Whyte.
- 8.6 Additional changes resulting from Councillor Catherine Harris joining the Labour Group are as follows:
- Councillor Gorrie to replace Councillor C Harris on the Remuneration Committee.
  - Councillor Catherine Harris will now be shown as a Labour member in both the Disciplinary pool and the Wood Green Area Assembly membership.
- 8.7 Changes to appointments can be made at any stage during the Municipal Year with the changes being reported to the Council as appropriate.