

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 18th MAY 2011

**REVIEW OF PROPORTIONALITY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF
COMMITTEES/PANELS OF THE COUNCIL**

REPORT OF THE SERVICE HEAD, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report reviews proportionality as required by section 15 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 ('The 1989 Act'), recommends the establishment of committees and panels in accordance with the Constitution and sets out the allocation of places on those committees and panels between the political groups represented on the Council. The nominations from the groups and others for membership of the committees and panels in accordance with this allocation of places; and other bodies not covered by the proportionality rules, will follow at the next agenda item.
- 1.2 Part 4 of the Constitution states that the Annual Council Meeting will establish an Overview & Scrutiny Committee, a Standards Committee and such other committees/panels as it considers appropriate to deal with matters which are neither reserved to the Council nor executive functions. Other bodies appointed by the Council are listed at Part 3 of the Constitution.
- 1.3 There has been no change to the political composition of the Authority since the last review of proportionality on 2nd February 2011 and therefore the recommended allocation of committee/panel places to the respective political groups remains unchanged. The one exception to this is the membership of the Standards Committee which, as it is not required to be proportionate, was not updated to include a Respect Group member following the formation of that group and this change is now proposed.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the review of proportionality be noted.
- 2.2 That committees and panels be established for the Municipal Year 2011/12, and places be allocated on those committees and panels, as set out at paragraph 4.2 overleaf.

2.3 That the membership of the Standards Committee at Article 9 of the Council's Constitution be amended to include 'Members (who may not include the Mayor or more than one other Cabinet Member), numbering three from the majority group on the Council, two from the largest minority group and one from another minority group; and nine Independent (i.e. non-Councillor) members.'

3. REVIEW OF PROPORTIONALITY

3.1 Section 15(1) of the 1989 Act requires the Council at or as soon as practicable after the Annual Meeting to carry out a review to determine the allocation to the political groups of seats on the committees/panels of the Council. The principles which must be adopted are:

- (i) that in relation to each body covered by the Act, all seats are not allocated to the same political group;
- (ii) that the majority of seats on each body must go to the political group with the majority on the Council;
- (iii) that subject to (i) and (ii) the number of seats on the total of all the ordinary committees/panels of the authority allocated to each group bears the same proportion as that group's proportion of the seats on the full Council; and
- (iv) that subject to the above three principles, the number of seats on each ordinary committee/panel of the authority allocated to each political group bears the same proportion as that group's proportion of the seats on the full Council.

3.2 Once the political groups have been allocated their places in accordance with the above rules, the Council may appoint ungrouped members to any remaining positions.

3.3 Neither the Cabinet and its executive sub-groups; nor the Standards Committee are covered by the requirement for proportionality.

3.4 The political composition of the Council is currently as follows:

Group	seats	%
Labour	32	62.74
Conservative	8	15.69
Respect	2	3.92
(Ungrouped*)	9	
Total	51	

* NB: For the purposes of the 1989 Act an individual Councillor cannot constitute a political group. The 'ungrouped' category above therefore includes Councillor Stephanie Eaton (Liberal Democrat) as well as the eight 'independent' Councillors.

4. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS

4.1 In accordance with the Constitution it is recommended that the Council establish the committees and panels listed below for the municipal year 2011/12. These provide for a total of 80 committee/panel seats, which will be allocated to the political groups in proportion to their numbers on the full Council as follows:-

Labour: 51 places
 Conservative: 12 places
 Respect: 3 places

4.2 The remaining 14 places are available for ungrouped members. Applying the principles in the Act as closely as is reasonably practicable the proposed allocation of places on the committees and panels for the remainder of the municipal year is as follows:-

(a) Committees/panels covered by the requirement for proportionality

Committee	Total	Labour	Conser- vative	Respect	Un- grouped
Overview & Scrutiny Committee (plus 6 co-optees)	9	6	1	1	1
Health Scrutiny Panel	7	5	1		1
Appeals Committee	7	4	1	1	1
Audit Committee	7	4	1		2
Development Committee	7	5	1		1
Strategic Development Committee	7	5	1		1
General Purposes Committee	7	4	1		2
Human Resources Committee	7	4	1		2
Licensing Committee	15	10	3	1	1
Pensions Committee	7	4	1		2

(b) Committee not covered by the requirement for proportionality

Committee	Total	Labour	Conser- vative	Respect	Un- grouped
Standards Committee (plus 9 Independent (non-Councillor) Members)	6	3	2	1	-

4.4 Each political group has been invited to submit nominations to the positions allocated to that group and the 'ungrouped' Members have been invited to indicate their preferences for membership. A schedule of proposed appointments will be tabled at the Annual Council meeting.

5. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL)

5.1 The legal position is set out in the main body of the report.

6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

6.1 There are no direct financial considerations arising from this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972 SECTION 100D (AS AMENDED)

LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of background papers:	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection
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- None