

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 11th JULY 2012

**REVIEW OF PROPORTIONALITY AND ALLOCATION OF
PLACES ON COMMITTEES AND PANELS OF THE COUNCIL**

REPORT OF THE SERVICE HEAD, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 A change in the political composition of the Council occurred on 25th June 2012 when the Leader of the Labour Group gave notice to the proper officer that for the purposes of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 ('the 1989 Act') Councillors Kabir Ahmed, Rofique Ahmed, Shahed Ali, Abdul Asad and Shafiqul Haque are no longer members of the Labour Group.
- 1.2 The Councillors named above have not given notice that they have joined any other political group and they will therefore serve on the Council as independent Councillors.
- 1.3 Consequent on this change the Council must review the allocation of places on Committees and other bodies covered by the proportionality requirements in the 1989 Act.
- 1.4 The proposed new allocations are set out overleaf. The effect of the change is to reduce by one the number of Labour Group members on each of the Overview and Scrutiny, Appeals, Audit, Licensing and Pensions Committees; and on the Health Scrutiny Panel; with a consequent increase in the number of unallocated positions. The Conservative and Respect Group allocations are unaffected.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the review of proportionality at paragraph 3 overleaf be noted and the Council agree the allocation of seats on committees and panels established for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2012/13 as set out at paragraph 4.2.
- 2.2 That Members and deputies be appointed to serve on those committees and panels in accordance with nominations from the political groups to be notified to the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services).

2.3 That the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) be authorised to approve the appointment of ungrouped Councillors to any committee places not allocated by the Council to a political group, after consultation with those Councillors and the Speaker of the Council.

3. REVIEW OF PROPORTIONALITY

3.1 Section 15(i) of the 1989 Act requires the Council as soon as practicable after a change in the political composition 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 nor any executive sub-groups are covered by the requirement for proportionality.

3.3 Following the changes described in Paragraph 1 to this report, the political composition of the Council is now as follows:

| Group | seats | % |
|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Labour | 27 | 52.94 |
| Conservative | 7 | 13.73 |
| Respect | 2 | 3.92 |
| (Ungrouped*) | 15 | |
| 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 fourteen 'independent' Councillors.

4. ALLOCATION OF PLACES ON COMMITTEES

4.1 The committees and panels established by the Council for the municipal year 2012/13 are listed below. There are a total of 91 places on these committees and panels. Seats will now be allocated to the political groups in proportion to their numbers on the full Council as follows:-

Labour: 51 places
 Conservative: 13 places
 Respect: 4 places

4.2 The remaining 23 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 covered by the requirement for proportionality for the remainder of the municipal year is as follows:-

| | Total | Labour | Conser- vative | Respect | Un- grouped |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Overview & Scrutiny Committee (plus 6 co-optees) | 9 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Health Scrutiny Panel | 7 | 4 | 1 | | 2 |
| Appeals Committee | 9 | 5 | 1 | | 3 |
| Audit Committee | 7 | 4 | 1 | | 2 |
| Development Committee | 7 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Strategic Development Committee | 9 | 5 | 2 | | 2 |
| General Purposes Committee | 7 | 4 | 1 | | 2 |
| Human Resources Committee | 7 | 4 | 1 | | 2 |
| Licensing Committee | 15 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| Pensions Committee | 7 | 4 | 1 | | 2 |
| Standards Advisory Committee (plus 7 co-optees) | 7 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

4.3 Each political group is invited to submit nominations to the positions allocated to that group and the Constitution provides for the Assistant Chief Executive then to agree appointments to committees/panels in accordance with the nomination of the political group to which a position has been allocated by the Council.

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 |
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

- None