

Law and Governance
Town Hall, Upper Street
London, N1 2UD

Report of: Director of Law & Governance – Monitoring Officer

Meeting of: Annual Council

Date: 11 May 2023

Ward(s): N/A

Subject: Calculation of Political Balance (Proportionality) and arrangements for committees

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. The report summarises the political balance of the Council and sets out matters relating to the allocation of seats to committees.
- 1.2. It is recommended that the Council note the political balance of the Council and agree the allocation of seats as detailed in the report.
- 1.3. The Council is also asked to note the Programme of Meetings for 2023-24.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Council note the political balance of the Council is:
 - 47 Members of the Labour Group
 - 3 Members of the Green Group
 - 1 independent member, who is not a member of a political group.
- 2.2. That the allocation of seats be approved, in order to comply with the political balance regulations requiring seats to be allocated proportionately to the political groups on the Council, as detailed in the report.
- 2.3. That the Programme of Meetings for 2023-24 be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council must allocate seats on committees to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules. The rules for the allocation of seats are set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.
- 3.2. Regulation 8 of The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 states that a political group on the Council is required to have at least two members in order to be formally constituted.
- 3.3. Section 15.5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the principles as follows:

Section 15: Duty to allocate seats to political groups

15.5 - The principles mentioned in subsection (4) above, in relation to the seats on any body which fall to be filled by appointments made by any relevant authority or committee of a relevant authority, are—

(a) that not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same political group;

(b) that the majority of the seats on the body is allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;

(c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that authority as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority; and

(d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of the seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

- 3.4. Section 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 states that the Council can only depart from these rules by passing a resolution with no member voting against the resolution.

- 3.5. This report sets out the proposed allocation of seats on the Council's committees based on the principles described above.

4. Proposed allocation of seats to political groups

- 4.1. The political composition of the Council is as follows:

<u>Political Group</u>	<u>Number of Councillors</u>	<u>Political Composition as Percentage</u>	<u>Equivalent Seats on Committees</u>
Labour	47	92.16%	99
Green	3	5.88%	6
Independent (non-grouped)	1	1.96%	-
TOTAL	51	100.00%	107

- 4.2. The political balance rules only apply to political groups. Independent councillors who are not members of a political group are not entitled to seats on committees under the relevant legislation.
- 4.3. The proposed political balance of the Council's committees is set out below. Political balance rules are not applicable to seats on the Executive, the Voluntary and Community Sector Committee, the Licensing Committee and its Sub-Committees, the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Pensions Board, and any joint committees exercising Executive functions. The allocation of seats on committees has been considered by the Council's political groups.

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Total Number of Seats</u>	<u>Proposed Labour Seats</u>	<u>Proposed Green Seats</u>
Audit Committee	4	4	
Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	8	7	1
Disciplinary Appeals Committee	5	4	1
Environment & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee	8	7	1
Grievance Appeals Committee	5	5	
Grievance Committee	5	5	
Health & Care Scrutiny Committee	8	7	1
Housing Scrutiny Committee	8	7	1
Investigating and Disciplinary Committee	5	5	
Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Health	2	2	
Licensing Regulatory Committee	4	4	
Pensions Sub-Committee	4	4	
Personnel Sub-Committee	5	5	

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Total Number of Seats</u>	<u>Proposed Labour Seats</u>	<u>Proposed Green Seats</u>
Planning Committee	10	9	1
Planning Sub-Committee A	5	4	1
Planning Sub-Committee B	5	5	
Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee	12	11	1
Standards Committee	4	4	
TOTAL	107	99	8
Number of Seats as Percentage	100.00%	92.52%	7.48%

- 4.4. In addition to the above, it is proposed to allocate a seat on the Licensing Committee to a councillor from the Green Group. and a seat on the Licensing Committee to the Independent Councillor.

5. Programme of Meetings 2023-24

- 5.1. The council produces a Programme of Meetings each year, detailing the dates of committee meetings and other major council events. This is produced following consultation with the council's political groups and senior officers. The programme for 2023-24 is appended. Any amendments to the dates of meetings will be agreed following consultation with the relevant Committee Chair and will be publicised via the meetings calendar on the council's website.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

- 6.1.1. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6.2. Legal Implications

- 6.2.1. The legal implications are set out within the body of the report.

6.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

There are no Environmental Implications associated with this report.

6.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4.1. The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of

opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

6.4.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required in relation to this report.

7. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

7.1. It is recommended that the Council approves the proposed allocation of seats, in line with the rules for determining political balance and proportionality.

Appendices:

- Programme of Meetings 2023-24

Background papers:

- None.

Final report clearance:

Approved by:

**Director of Law and Governance
Monitoring Officer**

Date: 2 May 2023

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