



**Meeting of the
General Purposes Committee**

**Meeting of the
Alcohol & Entertainment Licensing
Committee**

22nd May 2006

Report from the Borough Solicitor

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

**Review of Size of and Representation of Political Groups
on Sub-Committees**

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 At the Annual Meeting the Council is to review the representation of political groups on main committees. As soon as practicable after such a review, those committees are required to conduct a review of the representation of political groups on any sub-committees they may have. This report sets out the rules to be applied during the course of the review.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That each Committee confirm the size of its sub-committee(s) and endorse the Constitution adopted by the Council in so far it relates to sub-committee(s) of the Committee.
- 2.2 That each Committee determine the allocation of seats on its sub-committee(s) in accordance with the advice set out in this report.
- 2.3 That each Committee appoint Chairs and Vice-Chairs, Members and alternates to its sub-committee(s).

3.0 Detail

3.1 Once a review of representation of political groups gives rise to new membership on a main committee that committee in turn falls under a duty to review the representation of political groups on its sub-committees.

3.2 Once the size of sub-committees is decided the main committee must, so far as is reasonably practicable, give effect to the principles which follow:

(i) That not all seats on the sub-committee are allocated to the same political group.

(ii) That the majority of the seats on the sub-committee is allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership (this rule does not currently apply to the Council as no party group currently holds an overall majority of seats).

(iii) Subject to paragraph (i) above (and to (ii) above if it had been applicable) that the number of the seats on the sub-committee which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all seats on that sub-committee as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.

3.3 In relation to the council's ordinary (i.e. main) committees, there is an additional principle that [subject to the principles set out in paragraphs 3.2 (i) and (ii) above] the number of seats on the ordinary committees of the council which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of the council as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the council.

Members are asked to note that this principle specifically does not apply to ordinary sub-committees such as those of this committee.

3.4 The current political group composition of Brent Council is as follows: 27 Liberal Democrat, 21 Labour and 15 Conservatives councillors. The application of the principles set out at paragraph 3.2 above requires that the distribution of the available seats amongst the political groups on sub-committees of the size set out in the revised Constitution to be proposed to the Full Council meeting of 17 May is as follows:

3.5

Committee	Sub Committee	Size of Sub Committee	Liberal Democrats 42.86%	Labour 33.33%	Conservative 23.81%
General Purposes	Staff Appeals Sub-Committees A and B	5	2	2	1
	Schools Disciplinary	5	2	2	1
	Pension Fund	7	3	2	2

	Sub-Committee				
	General Purposes Licensing Sub-Committee	5	2	2	1
	Senior Staff Appointments Sub-Committee	5	2	2	1
Overview and Scrutiny	Health Overview Panel	7	3	2	2
	Adult and Social Care Scrutiny Panel	7	3	2	2
	Quality of Life Scrutiny Panel	7	3	2	2
	Performance and Finance Select Committee	7	3	2	2
	Forward Plan Select Committee	7	3	2	2
	Children and Families Scrutiny Panel	13 Councillor Members plus 4 voting and 2 non-voting co-optees	6	4	3

These figures are reached by “rounding out” fractions of seats so as to produce the minimum achievable deviation from the principle set out at paragraph 3.2(iii) above.

- 3.5 If any member intends to propose an alternative sub-committee size and allocation of seats they are requested to seek advice from the Borough Solicitor in advance of the meeting so the legality of the proposal can be checked.
- 3.6 The Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing Committee is required under the Brent Constitution, although not by law, to apply the political balance rules when making appointments to its sub-committees. The effect of this in the case of 3 member sub-committees, as set out in the revised Constitution to be proposed to the Full Council meeting of 17 May, is as follows:

Size of Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing Sub-Committees	Liberal Democrats 42.86%	Labour 33.33%	Conservative 23.81%
3	1	1	1

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 These are addressed in the body of the report.

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 This report has been screened by officers and there are not considered to be any diversity implications arising from it.

Background Papers

The Brent Constitution May 2006

Contact Officers

Terry Osborne, Borough Solicitor or Debra Norman, Deputy Borough Solicitor at the Town Hall Annexe, Town Hall, Wembley Tel: 020 8937 1310.

Terry Osborne
Borough Solicitor