



General Purposes Committee
24 May 2021

**Report from the Director of Legal, HR,
Audit & Investigations**

**Review of Representation of Political Groups and
Appointments**

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
No. of Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): (Name, Title, Contact Details)	James Kinsella Governance Manager Email: james.kinsella@brent.gov.uk Tel: 020 8937 2063

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 At its Annual meeting on 29 April 2021, Full Council reviewed and determined the representation of political groups on its main committees and subsequently made appointments to these, in accordance with the wishes of the political groups concerned. As soon as practicable after such a review, this Committee is also required to review and determine the representation of political groups on its Sub-committees and then make appointments giving effect to the wishes of the political groups allocated seats.
- 1.2 Since the review undertaken at the Annual Council meeting, the Brondesbury Park by-election has taken place resulting in the overall Council membership having increased from 62 to 63 members. We also now have one Independent Councillor, following that individual's resignation as a member of the Labour Group on the Council. The review undertaken for the General Purposes Committee has therefore been based on the current total membership of the Council being 63 members rather than 62, as it stood at the time of the Annual Council meeting. A further review will also need to be undertaken at the July Council meeting to reflect the outcome of the changes identified.

2.0 Recommendations

That on the basis of the updated membership of the Council, the Committee:

- 2.1 Agrees the size of each sub-committee to be appointed by the Committee;
- 2.2 Agrees the allocation of seats to political groups on each of the sub-committees in accordance with political balance rules; and
- 2.3 Appoints Chairs and Vice-Chairs, Members and Substitutes to each Sub-committee.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 As General Purposes Committee has three Sub-committees, it has a statutory duty to review and determine the representation of political groups on its Sub-committees as soon as practicable after any review undertaken by Full Council. The Committee then has a duty to make appointments to the Sub-committees giving effect to the wishes of the political group allocated seats.
- 3.2 The allocation of seats is determined by applying the political balance principles prescribed by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and supplemented by the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990. These principles are set out below and are designed to ensure that the political composition of committees and sub-committees, as far as reasonably practicable, replicate the political composition of Full Council.
- 3.3 The political balance principles are:
 - (i) That not all the seats on the sub-committee are allocated to the same political group.
 - (ii) That the majority of the seats on the sub-committee are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the Council's membership.
 - (iii) Subject to paragraphs (i) and to (ii) above, 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 the seats on that sub-committee as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the Council.
- 3.4 There is a 4th principle which applies to appointment of ordinary committees and which was therefore applied at the recent annual meeting. The legislation does not apply this principle to appointment to sub-committees.
- 3.5 Following the outcome of the Brondesbury Park by-election, the Membership of the Council now stands at 63 councillors with the composition of political groups as follows:

58 Labour Group councillors (92.06%) and three Conservative Group councillors (4.76%).

According to the political balance rules, a political group for this purpose is a group of two or more members. The Council's membership also includes one Liberal Democrat councillor, representing 1.59% of the total composition of the Council. In addition, one councillor has recently resigned as a member of the Labour Group on the Council and has chosen to continue as an Independent member. This councillor also represents 1.59% of the total composition of the Council. In light of the rules relating to political balance both of these councillors, as individual members, are not treated as having formed a political group for the purposes of the review.

3.6 The application of the three principles listed above therefore results in the following allocation of seats:

Committee	Sub Committee	Size of Sub-Committee	Labour 60 (92.06%)	Conservative 3 (4.76%)
General Purposes	Pension Fund Sub-Committee	7	6	1
	Senior Staff Appointments Sub-Committee	5	4	1
	Senior Staff Appeals Sub-Committee	5	4	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 Equality Implications

6.1 None.

Report sign off:

DEBRA NORMAN

Director of Legal HR, Audit & Investigations