

## **Council: 24<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

### **Review of Political Balance and Council Proportionality Arrangements**

Contact: James Kinsella (020 8379 4094) & Asmat Hussain (020 8379 6438)

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Council has been advised by the Majority Group of the need to change the membership status for Councillor Haydar Ulus and Councillor Nesimi Erbil from Independent to Labour. Notification of the original changes occurred as a result of a miscommunication between the Majority Party and their Regional Officers.
- 1.2 The membership status of both councillors has therefore been amended to reflect this correction, which has triggered the need for a further review of the political balance and composition of the Authority, under Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

#### **2. Review of Political Balance & Proportionality**

- 2.1 The last proportionality review was the annual update undertaken at the Annual Council Meeting on 13 May 2015. Following the change in status of both councillors identified above, the membership of the Council now stands as follows:
  - Labour: 41 members – which equates to an overall % in terms of Council membership of 65%
  - Conservatives: 22 members – which equates to an overall % in terms of Council membership of 35% (unchanged from the review in June 14)
- 2.2 Given the above change in membership, there has been a need to review the overall allocation of seats on Committees and other relevant bodies to take account of the revised % set out above.
- 2.3 Of the 159 seats available for allocation between the Groups, Labour (following the last proportionality review undertaken in May 2015) had 101 seats with the Conservative Group allocated 58. As a result of the revised political balance on the Council the overall % of seats that Labour are now entitled to has been increased by 5, which will give them a total allocation of 106 and equate to 65% of available seats.
- 2.4 The Labour Group has already vacated seats on the following bodies, as a result of the proportionality reviews undertaken at the time (October

2014 & February 2015) both councillors membership status was changed from Labour to Independent (Labour):

- Licensing Committee: (1 seat)
- Staff Appeals Panel: (2 seats)
- Edmonton Partnership Working Group: (1 seat)
- Public Transport Consultative Group: (1 seat)

It is therefore proposed that the 5 seats on these bodies are reallocated to the Labour Group, in order to comply with the proportionality requirements.

- 2.5 No change would be required in the overall allocation of seats to the Conservative Group, as their membership remains unaltered.
- 2.6 The Majority Group have advised that whilst both councillors are registered as members of the Labour Party, they remain administratively suspended from the local Labour Group, pending the outcome of internal Labour Party investigations. Given the current position, the Labour Group have advised that whilst accepting there will be a need to reallocate the 5 seats to them, they are not intending to fill them and will, instead keep them as vacant. This will be subject to further review, once the outcome of the internal Party investigations are known.

### **3. Recommendation**

Council is being asked to note the change in political balance and proportionality on the Council and to agree the revised allocation of seats as detailed above.