

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

ANNUAL COUNCIL – 22 MAY 2024

RATIOS ON AND APPOINTMENTS TO COUNCIL COMMITTEES

1. Proportionality

- 1.1 Political Groups on the Council are formed in accordance with the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 ('The Regulations'). They are treated as constituted when the Chief Executive, as proper officer, is given a notice in writing which sets out the name of the group; is signed by two or more members who wish to be treated as that political group; and includes the name of one member of the group who has signed the notice and who is to act as its leader.
- 1.2 Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 imposes a duty on the local authority at the annual meeting, or as soon as possible after it, to review the allocation of seats on the committees of the Council between the political groups. Such a review has been conducted annually, usually at the Council's Annual Meetings since then.
- 1.3 The following principles apply to the allocation of seats:
- (a) That not all the seats on the body to which appointments are being made are allocated to the same political group,
 - (b) That the majority of seats on each committee are allocated to a particular group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership,
 - (c) That, subject to (a) and (b), when allocating seats to a political group, the total number of their seats across all the ordinary committees of the Council, must reflect their proportion of the authority's membership (see notes below), and
 - (d) Subject to (a) to (c), that the number of seats on each committee is as far as possible in proportion to the group's membership of the authority.

Notes:

1. *The Council's ordinary committees are: Administration, Audit and Transparency, Investment, Planning and Planning Applications.*
 2. *The Licensing Committee is appointed under the Licensing Act 2003, the overview and scrutiny committee is appointed under section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Health and Wellbeing board is appointed under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and is to be treated as if appointed under section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972. None of the aforementioned committees are treated as an ordinary committee.*
- 1.4 Although the review is usually conducted once a year, one was requested in February 2024 following the creation of the Independent Group. The Regulations require that at least one-month elapses before another review is undertaken.

Following the decision of one Councillor to resign from the Labour Group and join the Conservatives in April 2024, increasing that group by one, a notice has been submitted to the proper officer to request a review of the political balance. The political composition of the Council on 14 May 2024 is as follows:

Table 1 Political Balance

	Council	Party Group Members	Cons.	K&C Lab.	Lib Dems	The Ind. Group
Members	50	48	36	8	2	2
Percentage of all Members			72%	16%	4%	4
Percentage of Party Group Members			75%	16.7%	4.2%	4.2%

2. Application of Principles

2.1 A full review was undertaken in February 2024 following the formation of a new party group and, as one month has elapsed since then, the Council may reconsider the political balance. The Majority Group gave due notice under the Regulations to request this review.

2.2 The differences since February 2024 are:

(i) On a 15-Member committee the balance would be 11 Conservative (unchanged), two Labour (down from three), and one each for both the Liberal Democrats and The Independent Group (and an additional seat to The Independent Group).

(ii) On a 16-Member committee, the balance would be 12 Conservative (an increase of one), two Labour (down from three) and one each for both the Liberal Democrats and The Independent Group (unchanged).

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the Council note that its political balance is 36 Conservative members, eight Labour Members, and two Liberal Democrats, two Independent Group members and two ungrouped Members.

3.2 That the Council confirm the ratios set out in **Appendix A**.

3.3 That the Council agree the appointments to Council Committees to be tabled at the meeting as **Appendix B**.

FOR DECISION

Robert Sheppard

Head of Governance & Mayoralty

Background papers used in the preparation of this report: None other than previously published documents.

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