

## **22/05/2022 – STATEMENT FROM THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP OF LAMBETH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

1. The Liberal Democrat Group position is that we want Lambeth to have a better governance structure that is representative and includes real scrutiny, so that it makes better decisions. Our preferred option is Lambeth returning to a Committee system, where all parties can meaningfully participate in decision-making, and with opposition parties leading the scrutiny functions. Therefore, we agree with the Green Group's manifesto commitment to a Committee system. We have also welcomed the Labour Group indicating a willingness also to adopt a committee system.
2. The 2026 local elections outcome was that no political group has an overall majority but the Green Group is the largest group. Eight Liberal Democrat councillors were returned, doubling our number at council. With Labour now the second largest party, the result shows that a majority of the public want change, after five terms of a Labour majority. To reflect this three-party situation, we have asked the other two parties to support constitutional reforms that will make the council more democratic.
3. A priority for the Liberal Democrat Group is to significantly enhance the role of ward councillors who know their areas best. We have put forward positive proposals to achieve this. Any understanding we reach with others will need to include a strengthened role for ward councillors.
4. Similarly, we remain committed to enhanced scrutiny including appropriate pre-scrutiny and referral back powers.
5. A campaign commitment for the Liberal Democrats was that Lambeth needs a balanced and legal budget, and we cannot enter into any understanding that does not include this commitment. For 26/27 this means working within the existing budget envelope.
6. Given the above, upon the adoption of a Committee system and a resolution that supports points 3, 4 and 5 above, the Liberal Democrat Group will enable the election of members of the Green Group to the posts of Leader and Deputy of the Council, and as chairs of agreed policy committees established as part of the adoption of a committee system of governance. This is on the basis the Green Group has the most councillors and is the only party able to form an administration without another party's active support. As part of improving scrutiny, we also require that chairs of any scrutiny committees, and as a default position chairs of regulatory committees, should be allocated to opposition members.
7. We remain of the view that the mayoralty should rotate between the Groups and will vote for the election of a Green Group Mayor in 2026/27 with a Liberal Democrat Group Deputy Mayor being voted for by the Green Group. The mayoralty should then pass in year 2 to the Liberal Democrat Group, then year 3 the Labour Group. This is on the basis that all mayors and deputies for several years have been from one party – Labour.
8. This statement is not able to cover matters such as special responsibility allowances, constitutional changes in the scheme of delegation, exact

committee structure and numbers, but we anticipate these being agreed in good faith at an early and appropriate time.

Cllr Matthew Bryant – Leader, Liberal Democrat Group

Cllr Tam Langlely – Deputy Leader, Liberal Democrat Group

Cllr Simon Cordon – Whip, Liberal Democrat Group