

MDA No.: 1753

Title: Minor Restructure of the City Hall Conservative Group Staffing Establishment

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The then Business Management and Administration Committee (now known as the GLA Oversight Committee) agreed the following delegation on 13 December 2007 to the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chairman and party Group Lead Members:

“To respond on behalf of the London Assembly to formal consultation from the Head of Paid Service (HoPS) concerning staff terms and conditions and changes to the establishment where there is not sufficient time to do so at a full Committee meeting.”

- 1.2 Following consultation with the Deputy Chairman and party Group Lead Members, there were no comments.

2. Decision

- 2.1 **That the Chief Officer’s proposed minor restructure of the City Hall Conservative Group staffing establishment be noted.**

Assembly Member

I confirm that I do not have any disclosable pecuniary interests in the proposed decision and take the decision in compliance with the Code of Conduct for elected Members of the Authority.

The above request has my approval.

Signature:



Printed Name:

Bassam Mahfouz AM

Date:

13 August 2025

3. Decision by an Assembly Member under Delegated Authority

Background and proposed next steps:

- 3.1 There are minor changes proposed to the City Hall Conservative Group staffing establishment to ensure Assembly Members receive the best possible outcomes.
- 3.2 The full details of the changes are included in the report at **Appendix 1**. The restructure would see the creation of one Grade 7 Senior Researcher and one Grade 7 Senior Press Officer, and the deletion of two Grade 6 Research Officer roles and of one Grade 6 Digital Communications Officer role (0.5 FTE).
- 3.3 Following approval, the new team structure is expected to be in place from September 2025, and any redundancies intended to take effect from 1 September 2025.
- 3.4 The exercise of delegated authority responding to the Chief Officer's proposed minor restructure of the City Hall Conservative Group staffing establishment will be formally noted at the GLA Oversight Committee's next appropriate meeting.

Confirmation that appropriate delegated authority exists for this decision:

Signature (Committee Services): *Judith Smyth*

Printed Name: Judith Smyth

Date: 5 August 2025

Financial Implications: REQUIRED

- 3.5 The estimated total annual cost of the new staffing structure would result in a yearly cost reduction of c.£9,000 (including NICS and superannuation), which is affordable within the budgeted 2025-26 Conservative pay envelope and planned future year budgets. Appropriate non-pay provision has also been retained.
- 3.6 The small cost savings from the restructure will provide the Conservative Group office financial flexibility to adapt to short-term pressures and provide the team with extra resilience. However, the savings are not enough to support the retention of any of the posts proposed for deletion.

Signature (Finance): 

Printed Name: Trisha Brigemohane

Date: 15/08/25

Telephone Number: N/A

Legal Implications:

The Chair of the GLA Oversight Committee has the power to make the decision set out in this report.

Signature (Legal):



Printed Name: Rory McKenna

Date: 11 September 2025

Telephone Number: N/A

Supporting Detail / List of Consultees:

- Emma Best AM
- Caroline Russell AM
- Hina Bokhari OBE AM

4. Public Access to Information

- 4.1 Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the FoIA, or the EIR and will be made available on the GLA Website, usually within one working day of approval.
- 4.2 If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.
- 4.3 **Note:** this form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral: NO

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred?

If yes, until what date:

Part 2 – Sensitive Information:

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA or EIR should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form? NO

Lead Officer / Author

Signature: *Lewis Preston*

Printed Name: Lewis Preston

Job Title: Head of Conservative Group Office

Date: 4 August 2025

Countersigned by Executive Director:

Signature: 

Printed Name: Helen Ewen

Date: 5 August 2025

Proposed Restructure of the Assembly Secretariat's City Hall Conservative Group staffing establishment – June 2025

Summary

1. This paper sets out the proposals for changes to the Greater London Authority (GLA) staffing establishment in relation to the Assembly Secretariat's Conservative Group team.

Background

2. Sitting within the Assembly Secretariat directorate of the GLA, the City Hall Conservative Group is responsible for providing high quality political service delivery to the elected Conservative Members of the London Assembly. This includes providing political and strategic advice, undertaking policy and research work, producing briefings and policy reports including support for Assembly Committees, providing media and communications support, undertaking administrative tasks and diary management, and dealing with constituency casework and local correspondence. The team also supports Assembly Members to engage with internal and external stakeholders and represents Members' GLA positions and interests.

3. The current staffing establishment of the Conservative Group team is set out at Appendix 1.

Rationale for proposals

4. These proposals are being put forward in the context of the outcome of the May 2024 GLA elections and change in leadership of the Conservative Group in April 2025. Last year, following the May 2024 GLA elections, the Conservative Group received a new slate of Assembly Members, and the Group considered different ways of working for the new Assembly term. This included consideration of broader changes in ways of working of the proceeding Assembly term, and shifts in the nature of demands on Member time. As a result, the Conservative Group altered its staffing establishment and team structure.

5. In April 2025, the leadership of the Conservative Group changed and, as a result, an assessment of the 2024 restructure was undertaken, with additional consideration of potential broader changes to the ways of working to support a change of political direction and priorities of the Assembly Members. These priorities have shifted over the course of the first year of the term, and as new Members settle in to post, and all Members settle into designated Committee roles for the term. Proposals have also been influenced by external factors which we now anticipate will also determine priority areas of focus, including the likely introduction of an integrated funding settlement for London.

6. As a result, we have identified a structure which would be both workable and complementary to Assembly Members' priorities and changing political direction, while also addressing the limitations of the 2024 restructure. The proposed changes reflect the very limited scope that exists overall to deliver change given the specific constraints on Group budgets and the small scale of budget and team size overall.

7. The proposed structure ensures a similar level of line management and leadership provision, builds on previous enhancements to our policy and research function, unlocks capacity, flexibility and resilience, and reflects shifts in emphasis in the nature of the media and communications support. It will also facilitate a desired move towards more senior and experienced provision, required to support complex research and policy initiatives (specifically in financial scrutiny and

audit), as well as to strengthen Assembly Member communications by expanding traditional media support (reflecting a clearer understanding of where Member demand is likely to be).

8. The proposals contain sufficient non-staffing budget provision to cover general office and Assembly Member expenditure, for example the electronic casework system licence, staff and Member training, stationery/postage, and general expenses.

9. The cost savings from the restructure will provide the Conservative Group office financial flexibility to adapt to short-term pressures and provide the team with extra resilience.

10. Unfortunately, given the context and rationale of these proposals, and the constraints outlined above, some post deletions and staff redundancies could not be avoided.

11. The restructure process will follow the GLA Organisational Change Policy and Procedure and staff will be given relevant ring-fenced opportunities, with redeployment explored afterwards if necessary.

12. Any redundancy payment will be calculated using the terms set out in the Organisational Change Policy and Procedure.

Proposals

13. I propose the following changes to the staffing structure for the Conservative Group team, which is also outlined in Appendix 2:

- a. **1x Grade 11 Head of Office** - this would be the same role as in the current structure and act as chief coordinating role in the office, overseeing all service delivery, leading on political Group business and stakeholder management, and overall team strategy. They would also directly line manage the Research and Policy Manager, the Lead Communications and Public Engagement Manager, and the Support Officers.
- b. **1 x Grade 8 Research and Policy Manager** – this would be the same role as in the current structure. They will be responsible for line managing the Senior Researchers and providing crucial coordination and policy research support to Assembly Members.
- c. **1 x Grade 8 Lead Communications and Public Engagement Manager** – this would be the same role as in the current structure. They will be responsible for line managing the Digital Communications Officer and Senior Press Officer. The role reflects the shifting patterns of modern communications. The capacity generated from the additional Senior Press Officer role (see below) will allow for the LCPEM to have a greater focus on digital communications and public engagement to promote London Assembly functions and implement Assembly Member communications outputs.
- d. **4 x Grade 7 Senior Researchers (existing roles) + 1 x Grade 7 Senior Researcher (new role)** - these positions perform the same role as in the current structure, delivering high-quality policy research for Assembly Members, including policy reports, briefings and assisting with communications content. This sees the creation of one new Senior Researcher role, which will specialise in financial and audit scrutiny.
- e. **1 x Grade 7 Senior Press Officer (new role)** – this position will be responsible for devising and implementing targeted communications plans for Assembly Members, in

order to maximise the impact of their work. The new role will focus on traditional forms of media (press and broadcast) to address limitations in the current structure, and to reflect a change of the Group's priorities.

- f. **1 x Grade 6 Digital Communications Officers** - this would be the same role as the current structure, leading on digital and social media outputs on behalf of Assembly Members, with support from the Lead Communications and Public Engagement Manager.
- g. **3 x Grade 6 Support Officers** – these roles would be the same as within the current structure, supporting Assembly Members in relation to their diary management, casework enquiries, constituency work and local research, and meeting/events assistance.

14. It is proposed that the existing posts will therefore be deleted:

- 2 x Grade 6 Research Officers (Grade 6)
- 1 x Digital Communications Officer, 0.5 FTE (Grade 6)

15. If approved, it is currently expected that this new team structure would come into effect in later 2023. As such, any redundancies are intended to take effect from later September or early October 2025.

16. There are currently 13 x 1.0 FTE roles and 1 x 0.5 FTE roles in the Conservative Group team. Under these proposals, there would be 13 x 1.0 FTE roles.

17. The estimated total annual cost of the new staffing structure would be £796,000.00 (including NICS and superannuation), which is within the budgeted 2025/26 envelope of £810,88.00. Appropriate non-pay provision has also been retained.

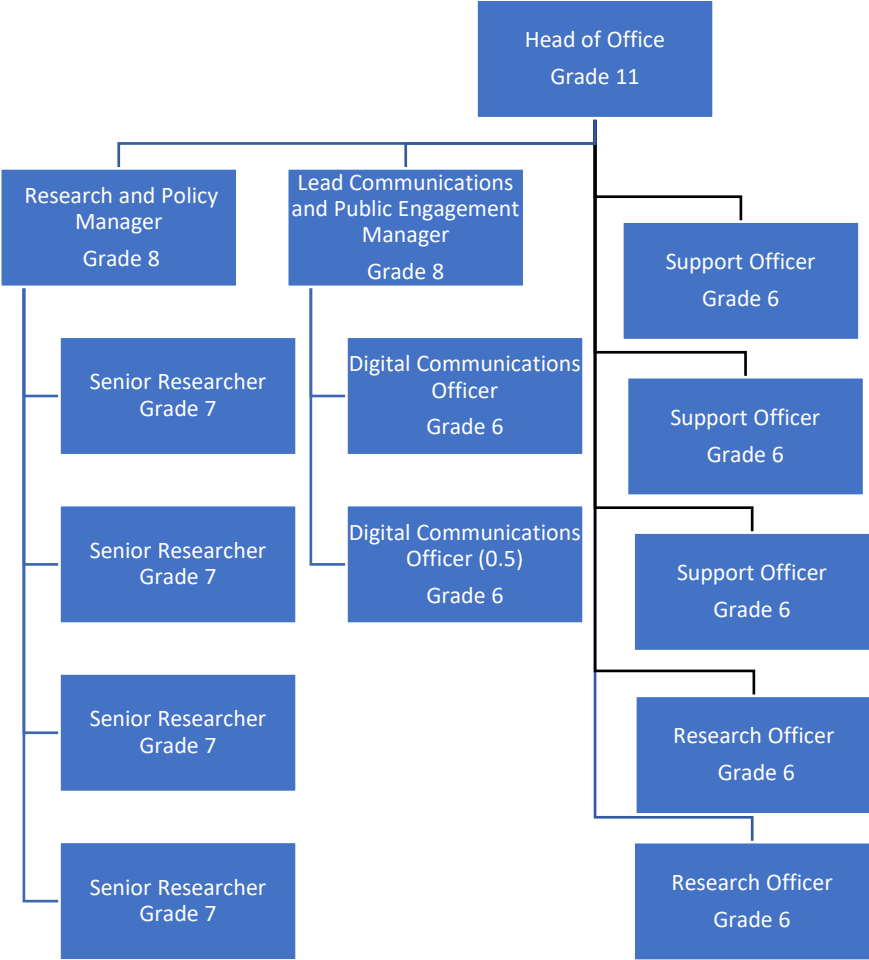
18. The small cost savings from the restructure will provide the Conservative Group office financial flexibility to adapt to short-term pressures and provide the team with extra resilience. However, the savings are not enough to support the retention of any of the posts proposed for deletion.

19. The equalities impact assessment information for these proposals is set out, as far as it can be, in Appendix 3.

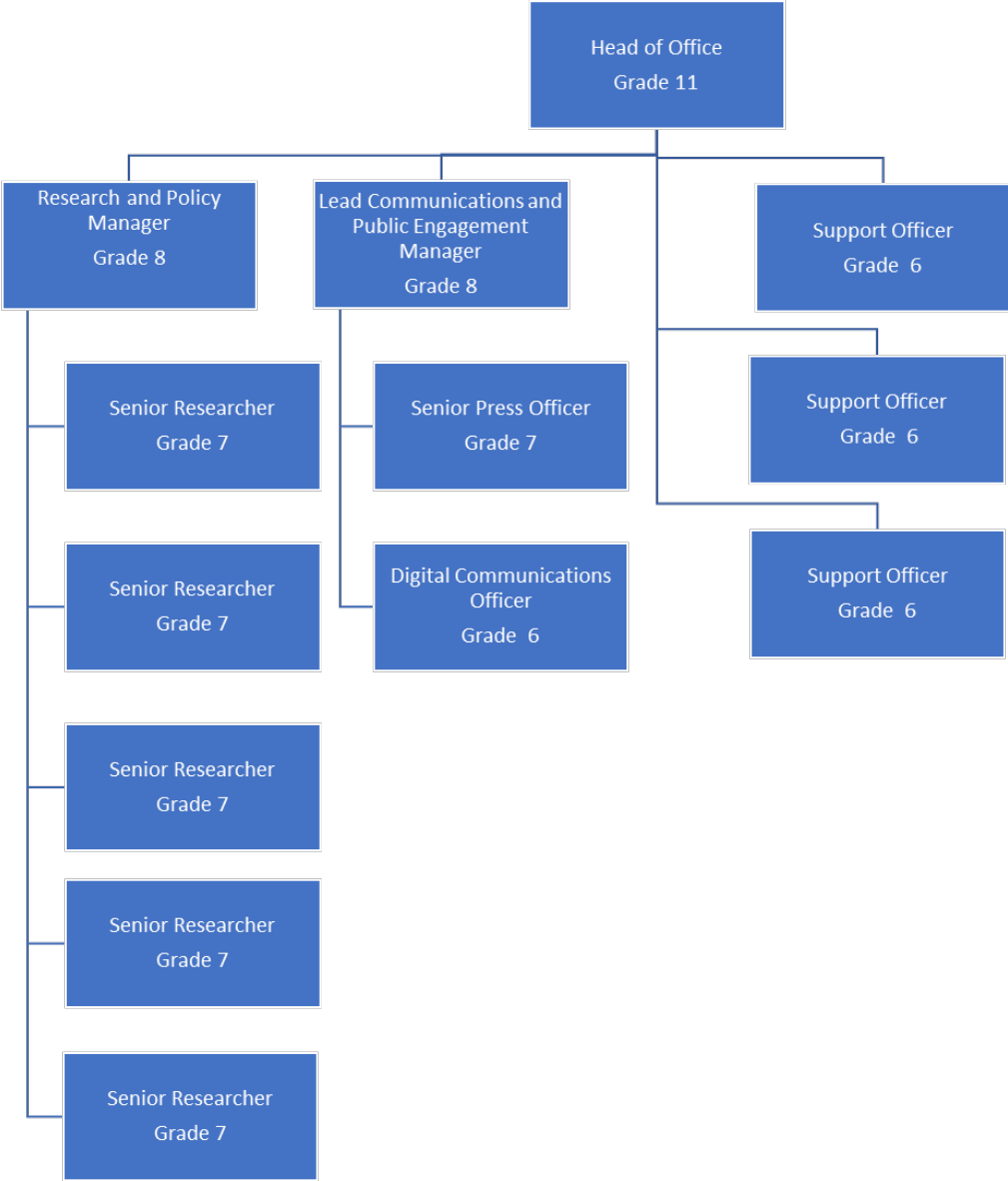
20. Individuals involved this consultation process (i.e. those placed 'at risk' of redundancy) who wish to flag any particular issues during this process are invited to do so either in their 1:1 consultation meeting or by emailing me.

21. Formal responses to these proposals must be submitted to me (Lewis.Preston@london.gov.uk) by no later than 5pm on XXXXX.

Appendix 1



Appendix 2



Appendix 3

Equalities Impact Assessment

Reason for Assessment

It is necessary to consider potential changes to the structure of the City Hall Conservative Group in light of changes in the leadership and priorities of the Group, and further assessment of Member needs post Election. It is anticipated that proposed changes to the Assembly Secretariat City Hall Conservative Group Team (the team) will deliver further improvements to the operation of the team and will better reflect the priorities and ways of working of Members. Proposals will potentially affect 4 staff within the team. It has not been possible to avoid potential redundancies, and this document therefore considers any potential equalities considerations arising.

Reason for Change

This paper sets out the background to the proposed changes, and the details of the proposals.

Areas of Proposed Change

In structural terms, proposals include the deletion of 3 posts, the creation of 2 new posts. Establishment numbers will move from 13.5 FTE to 13 FTE. The proposals create redundancy risk for four current members of the team. Those at risk of redundancy will be provided with priority opportunity to apply for new roles in line with the GLA's Organisational Change Policy.

The anticipated impact of these changes can be seen in the following key areas:

- **Reflective of Member priorities and activity:** it is considered that the proposals will provide a clearer reflection of the focus of priorities for our Members and will ensure team roles are well aligned with priorities. This is particularly the case in terms of more senior research capacity on the budget, a critical area of work for the Group this term.
- **Resilience:** building on this, the proposals also seek to build resilience within the structure, ensuring greater breadth in expertise on the comms side in particular, and where the team is currently too reliant on one individual to deliver key functions for Members.

Considered protected characteristics groups

In bringing forward proposals, we have considered impacts according to protected characteristic groups – and in particular in respect of race, disability, age and sex/gender (and recognising that these groups are interconnected as many GLA colleagues may sit in more than one group).

This is a relatively small team within the GLA – and within a very distinct setting. There have been challenges for the Secretariat as a whole in terms of improving the diversity of both long and short lists for roles, reflecting the wider challenges faced in comparable institutions. This is further exacerbated for Group offices by the high pressure/high pace nature of the environment and the particular political setting.

We do not consider that there will be specific detrimental impacts in respect of protected characteristics. Those staff put at risk will be given a full opportunity to engage in a consultation period before changes are made. New posts will be ring fenced to allow those at risk to apply before any roles are advertised more widely if necessary. They will receive direct support in making their applications, and to ensure they are clear about the nature and requirements of the new roles.