

**From:** [FOI](#)  
**To:** [request-460347-5c2e9d77@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-460347-5c2e9d77@whatdotheyknow.com)  
**Subject:** FOI 014/17 Aspire Application Process Response  
**Date:** 23 February 2018 15:00:26  
**Attachments:** [2017-10-11-Aspire-Financial scheme decision record REDACTED.pdf](#)  
[2018-01-25 - Aspire - Decision record - REDACTED.pdf](#)

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Dear [REDACTED],

**Our Ref: FOI 014/18**

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated **26 January 2018**.

The Commission aims to respond to requests for information promptly and has done so within the statutory timeframe of twenty working days.

Your request is in bold below followed by our response.

- 1. Can you tell me how many public comments were made in regards to the application to register Aspire as a political party?**
- 2. Can you publish the assessment of the application? Can you tell me which officer considered the application or was there a panel?**

Our response is as follows:

**We hold the information you have requested.**

*Question 1*

42 comments were received by the Commission in regards to the application to register Aspire as a political party.

## Question 2

We have released to you two documents.

The first is the decision record relating to the party's application.

The Commission assesses all applications to register political parties carefully against the requirements set out in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA).

A registration application is assessed initially by the Registration Team. The member of the Registration Team that conducts that initial assessment makes a recommendation to either approve or reject that application based on whether or not the application meets the PPERA requirements. The assessment is subsequently put to the Commission's internal Approvals Board, chaired by the Director of Political Finance and Regulation & Legal Counsel who takes the final decision on an application. The decision record thus outlines the final decision on a registration application along with comments from the Approvals Board, as well as the assessment conducted by the Registration Team.

The Commission's internal Approvals Board is made up of senior Commission staff and is chaired by the Director of Political Finance and Regulation & Legal Counsel. Below is a list of the Approvals Board members for the Aspire application assessment:

- Bob Posner - Director of Political Finance and Regulation & Legal Counsel
- Craig Westwood – Director of Communications & Research
- Louise Edwards – Head of Regulation
- Tom Hawthorn – Head of Policy
- Andy O'Neill – Head of Electoral Commission - Scotland
- Rhydian Thomas – Head of Electoral Commission - Wales
- Ann Watt – Head of Electoral Commission – Northern Ireland
- Ben Wilkinson – Head of External Communications
- Senior Regulatory Lawyer

The second document which we have released is the decision record relating to the party's financial scheme.

In order to be registered a party must have adopted a financial scheme, approved by the Commission, that demonstrates how the party will comply with the legal requirements of PPERA. Aspire's financial scheme was assessed separately from the other components of the party's application, hence the second document. Whilst financial schemes are assessed by the Registration Team, when assessed separately a final decision is made by the Approvals Board chair without input from other Board members.

#### *Exemption under section 40*

You will notice that certain personal details have been redacted from the documents we are releasing. This redaction is necessary because section 40(2) and (3)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) Act provides that personal data, where its disclosure would breach one of the data protection principles, is exempt from disclosure. The first data protection principle states that personal data must be processed fairly and lawfully.

The Commission also considers that it would be unfair to release the names and personal contact details of junior officials, who were not employed in public facing roles and did not act as spokespersons for their employer, as those individuals would have a reasonable expectation that this personal data would not be disclosed to the general public. Other personal data has been withheld as it relates to sensitive personal data of identifiable, living individuals.

I trust that this information satisfies your request. The Commission strives to be an open, transparent authority, but in some circumstances we cannot responsibly release requested information, and we ask for your understanding in this regard.

If you are not satisfied with this response, please note that the Commission operates a review procedure, details of which can be found on the Commission website at: <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/about-us/freedom-of-information-requests/how-do-i-make-an-foi-request>

Please also note that if you have exhausted all internal Commission review procedures and you are still not satisfied you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner. Details of this procedure can be found on the ICO

website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Yours sincerely,



**Information, Knowledge and Systems Manager**

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# Application summary

PR 17/29 – 21 November 2017

The following table summarises the applications received by the Commission and the registration team's recommendations

**Table 1: Director of Political Finance & Regulation and Legal Counsel delegated party registration decisions**

Party name and proposed party identity marks (link to assessment note)	Registration team assessment
<p><a href="#">Aspire</a></p> <p><b>Proposed name:</b> Aspire</p> <p><b>Proposed descriptions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hope   Ambition   Delivery</li> <li>2. Progress   Fairness   United Tower Hamlets</li> <li>3. We Can Together</li> <li>4. Aspiration for All</li> <li>5. Your Anti-Austerity Candidate</li> <li>6. Progressive Alliance</li> <li>7. Hope for All</li> <li>8. Grassroots Movement</li> <li>9. Hope   Progress   One Tower Hamlets</li> <li>10. Stronger Together</li> <li>11. Ye are Many / You are Many</li> <li>12. The Anti-Austerity Party</li> </ol> <p><b>Proposed emblem:</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Party</li> <li>• England application complete 15.09.17</li> <li>• Public notice published 08.12.17</li> <li>• Recommendation to approve name and emblem and to reject all descriptions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Initial view</b></p> <p>BP 18.12.2017: As recommended, I am minded to approve this new party [name] and the emblem. Also, to reject all of the applied for descriptions for reason of not being 'descriptions' in terms of PPERA as they do not relate to the name of the party and so are not descriptions of it that enable the voter to identify the party.</p> <p>I can see from the Registration Team Assessment that it is likely this party / some of its senior officials or members have connections with Lutfur Rahman, who is currently banned from holding public office. The circumstances related to that ban continue to be of significant public interest and concern in Tower Hamlets L.B. and more widely. One of the factors as to whether a political party can properly meet its PPERA obligations and so be a registered party is whether its officers would be capable and likely to meet the statutory PPERA requirements. In view of Luther Rahman's (and the other party officers of 'Tower Hamlets First') unacceptable track record, had they been named officers of this Aspire party, I would have been very cautious of being satisfied at this point as to</p>

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Party name and proposed party identity marks (link to assessment note)	Registration team assessment
	<p>their suitability in the above terms. If Aspire is approved by me for registration, and if in future Lutfur Rahman (or other party officers of 'Tower Hamlets First') become officers of Aspire, I will want us to review the registration of Aspire to ensure it continues to be suitable as a registered political party under PPERA. I am minded we should let Aspire know this at this time, particularly as if we approve the party we may well want to make this aspect clear in our public lines and any responses to interested persons.</p> <p>As noted in the Registration Team assessment, should the party be registered we need to write to them to make clear that they must deliver transactions and loans returns in accordance with PPERA unless exempt. Also the party must apply to amend their financial scheme if in future the party does intend to engage in regulated transactions, and do so successfully prior to engaging in such transactions.</p> <p><b>Approval Board Comments</b></p> <p>LE: I agree with the recommendation and initial view.</p> <p><a href="#">TH: I agree with the recommendation and initial view.</a></p> <p><a href="#">RT: Agree with the recommendation and the initial view</a></p> <p><a href="#">[REDACTED] I agree with the recommendation and initial view. I note the point about loans and transactions and note that under Islamic law the payment of interest is forbidden- which</a></p>

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PR 17/29 – 21 November 2017

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Party name and proposed party identity marks (link to assessment note)	Registration team assessment
	<p><u><a href="#">may explain why the applicant has the stated position.</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">BW: I agree with the initial view.</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">AON: Agree with Bob's view.</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">AW: I agree with the initial view</a></u></p> <p><b>Further minded to Decisions</b></p> <p>BP 5.1.2018: I am grateful for [REDACTED] reminder on Islamic law, which may be the reason why the party does not seek to address loans and transactions. I have reviewed the external comments received on this application. I note that no external comments have been received from certain persons who have been vocal about elections issues in Tower Hamlets and, or were petitioners in the Tower Hamlets First case. That is fine, so long as in all the circumstances we are satisfied sufficient of such persons are aware of this new party application and the period for comment to us. I understand that the senior officers at Tower Hamlets Council were going to make them aware of such matters. Registration Team are checking whether this did happen. If it did not, before making decision on this application I would want opportunity for comment from such interested persons, so as to ensure there are no material relevant considerations I should take into account in making decisions on this application. If it did happen, I remain minded to approve this new party [name] and the emblem. Also,</p>

# Application summary

PR 17/29 – 21 November 2017

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Party name and proposed party identity marks (link to assessment note)	Registration team assessment
	<p>to reject all of the applied for descriptions for reason of not being 'descriptions' in terms of PPERA as they do not relate to the name of the party and so are not descriptions of it that enable the voter to identify the party. Further, my comments under my initial view as to letting the party know we would review the registration in the event of certain party officer changes, apply. To add to that, we should also make it clear to the party that if the party operates in a way whereby the party is effectively run or controlled by others who are not named officers, or if the party is not run as set out in its Constitution and Financial Scheme, we would also review the registration.</p> <p><b>I will take my final decisions once the Registration Team revert to me on the above notification of the application point.</b></p> <p><b>BP 21.01.2018:</b> I have reviewed all of the papers, including the updated assessment and the representations received. It is apparent that there are strong concerns to ensure that the past significant problems in Tower Hamlets do not occur again. That objective is absolutely right. It is also right that subject to legal requirements, new or existing political parties should be able to stand candidates and contest local elections seeking to represent residents. In its capacity as Registrar of Political Parties, the Commission's role is to apply the PPERA registration tests, in context and on merit. I am satisfied that the Registration Team assessment does that, and for the reasons in the assessment <b><u>I am minded to approve this new party [name] and the emblem. Also, to reject all of the applied</u></b></p>



# Application summary

PR 17/29 – 21 November 2017

The following table summarises the applications received by the Commission and the registration team's recommendations

Party name and proposed party identity marks (link to assessment note)	Registration team assessment
	<p><b>for descriptions for reason of not being 'descriptions' in terms of PPERA</b> as they do not relate to the name of the party and so are not descriptions of it that enable the voter to identify the party.</p> <p>Further, the party is to be informed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We will review the registration in the event of certain party officer changes.</li> <li>- If the party operates in a way whereby the party is effectively run or controlled by others who are not named officers, or if the party is not run as set out in its Constitution and Financial Scheme, we will also review the registration.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Before I reach a final determination on this application I would want the Approval Board Members to consider the updated assessment and representations received. I will then also take into account any comments from Approval Board Members, before I make final decisions.</u></b></p> <p><b>Approval Board Second Comments</b></p> <p><u>TH: I have considered the updated registration assessment and representations, and I agree with Bob's minded-to view that the Commission should approve the proposed party name and emblem, and to reject the proposed descriptions.</u></p> <p><u>█ I have considered the updated registration assessment and agree with Bob's minded to views in particular reviewing the position should there be evidence that the party operates in a way</u></p>

# Application summary

PR 17/29 – 21 November 2017

The following table summarises the applications received by the Commission and the registration team's recommendations

Party name and proposed party identity marks (link to assessment note)	Registration team assessment
	<p><u>whereby the party is effectively run or controlled by others who are not named officers.</u></p> <p><u>AON: I agree with Bob's minded course of action.</u></p> <p><u>RT: I also agree with Bob's view</u></p> <p><u>CW: I also agree with Bob's view</u></p> <p><u>LE: I agree with the initial view.</u></p> <p><b>Final Decisions</b></p> <p>BP 25.1.2018: For the reasons in the assessment approve this new party [name] and the emblem. Also, reject all of the applied for descriptions for reason of not being 'descriptions' in terms of PPERA as they do not relate to the name of the party and so are not descriptions of it that enable the voter to identify the party.</p> <p>Further, the party is to be informed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- We will review the registration in the event of certain party officer changes.</li><li>- If the party operates in a way whereby the party is effectively run or controlled by others who are not named officers, or if the party is not run as set out in its Constitution and Financial Scheme, we will also review the registration.</li></ul>

# Aspire

## Application to register a new party

### Party information

- The party lodged an [application](#) on 30 June 2017 (please note that the date stamp on the application is incorrect) to register a political party on the Great Britain register in the name of 'Aspire'.
  - After the application was submitted we requested further information from the party in relation to their application.
  - We approved the party's financial scheme on 11 October 2017 – [decision record](#).
  - We are now in a position to assess the application.
  - The details of the application were published on the Commission's website on 8 December 2017.
  - The party intends to stand candidates in England.
- The objective of the party as listed in their constitution is as follows:
  - The purpose of the Tower Hamlets Together (also referred to herein as 'party' or 'the Party' or 'party') shall be to promote independent, democratic, socialist values and give residents a strong voice in the governance of the area in which they live, work or study.
- The party's aims are listed in their constitution as follows:
  - **A JUST SOCIETY**, which judges its strength by the condition of the weak as much as the strong, provides security against fear, and justice at work; which nurtures families, promotes equality of opportunity, and delivers people from the tyranny of poverty, prejudice and the abuse of power.
  - **TO PROMOTE THE INTEREST OF THE CITIZENS** of the area (e.g. London Borough of Tower Hamlets) by seeking to ensure that the service provided by the local authority reflects the needs of residents.
  - **AN OPEN DEMOCRACY**, in which government and the local authority administration is held to account by the people, decisions are taken as far as practicable by the communities they affect and where fundamental human rights are guaranteed, without any form of prejudice.

- **A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT**, which we protect, enhance and hold in trust for future generations.
- **A DYNAMIC ECONOMY FOR ALL** serving the public interest, public services where those undertakings essential to the common good are either owned by the public or accountable to them, as well as, the principle of fair enterprise.
- **POLITICAL POWER** in order to put into effect the aspirations of residents/citizens as expressed in the Party Manifesto.
- **AN EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN ORGANISATION** to return the Party candidates at all elections.
- The party had previously applied to register under the name 'Tower Hamlets Together'. That application was rejected. Please find links to the [application summary](#) and [registration note](#) for that application.
- That application attracted some attention from the media. A sample of the press articles are as follows:
  - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-38855417>
  - <http://lovewapping.org/2017/02/bbc-london-news-lutfur-rahman-is-back-video/> (including video of BBC report)
  - <http://lovewapping.org/2017/01/lutfur-rahman-makes-comeback-with-new-political-party-tower-hamlets-together/>
  - <http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/disgraced-lutfur-rahman-attempts-political-comeback-a3451561.html>
  - <http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/763681/Lutfur-Rahman-forces-BBC-out-of-Tower-Hamlets-meeting>
  - <http://www.eastlondonlines.co.uk/2017/02/tea-with-deposed-former-mayor-lutfur-rahman/>
  - <http://lovewapping.org/2017/05/tower-hamlets-together-non-party-refuses-die/>
- There has been a clear implication that Lutfur Rahman, the leader of the formerly registered party 'Tower Hamlets First' has a significant role in the applicant party.
- Richard Mawrey QC as Election Commissioner in his judgement of the Election Petition to have Mr Rahman's election as Mayor of Tower Hamlets set aside, made serious and critical comments about Tower Hamlets First's financial scheme and the conduct of the financial affairs of that party. That judgement can be read using this [link](#).
- None of the persons named in the application appear to be mentioned in Richard Mawrey QC's judgement in relation to the 2014 Election Petition.

- Prior to lodging the application the subject of this assessment the party had, after their application to register 'Tower Hamlets' together had been rejected, lodged an application to be called 'Democratic Coalition'. That application was withdrawn and the current application lodged in its place.
- I have not been able to find any website or social media accounts for the party.

## Comments received from members of the public (updated added by [REDACTED] on 18.01.18)

- The Commission has received a number of comments on the application from members of the public. Some support the registration of the party and others object to it. I have included a link to each submission received from a member of the public in Appendix E.
- We wrote to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on 15 January 2018 in line with the decisions maker's comments on the application summary dated 5 January 2018. We have received several responses from [REDACTED] and a response from [REDACTED]. Those responses are included in Appendix E.
- I note that recent articles on the Love Wapping website have encouraged members of the public to contact the Commission about the application. See articles dated [16 January 2018](#), [16 January 2018](#) and [17 January 2018](#).
- For completeness I also note here that we received a [letter from Jim Fitzpatrick MP](#) in relation to this application.
- The decision maker will note that the majority of the comments set out in Appendix E do not strictly relate to the statutory tests as set out in PPERA. There are some comments that generally express their support for the party. There are also comments that object to the party being registered based on the alleged involvement in the party of Lutfur Rahman.
- There are some comments that I think do appear to be relevant to the statutory tests. I have sought to summarise what I think those points are:
  - That there are other organisations active in the borough of Tower Hamlets that are named or include Aspire in their name. The following organisations have been drawn to our attention: [Aspire – Toynbee Hall's flagship youth project](#); [Aspire – a charity supporting those paralysed by Spinal Cord Injury](#), [Aspire – a recruitment agency](#) and a

charity called Aspire that 'involves football and Bahrain and has connections in Tower Hamlets'. I set this out in the context of the requirement that a name must not be likely to result in an elector being misled as to the effect of their vote.

- That the proposed emblem is almost identical to that of the deregistered party Tower Hamlets First (which can be viewed [here](#)). I set this out in the context of the requirement that an emblem must not be likely to result in an elector being misled as to the effect of their vote.
- That Tower Hamlets First failed to comply with the rules for political parties. As Lutfur Rahman was the leader of that party and is alleged to be involved in the applicant party, the implication is that the applicant party will not comply with the funding and spending rules in PPERA. Connected to that is also the assertion that the proposed registered officers are not capable of undertaking the duties of a registered political party. I set these factors out here in the context of the requirement to have adopted a financial scheme.
- I will consider each of the abovementioned points in turn, however, in the first instance it is important to recognise that the Commission considers each application on a case by case basis and applies the statutory tests to the facts and context in each case.

The proposed registered name Aspire

- As set out in the assessment below, the Registration team was already aware of most of the organisations that have been drawn to our attention. However, it is right that we consider again the position in light of the public comments.
- The exception to this is the Aspire charity relating to football and Bahrain. We have not been provided with any precise details in relation to that organisation. After conducting a Google search, I think it is possible that the person was referring to [Aspire Academy](#) which describes its goal on its website to '...find and develop the best young male Qatari athletes, whilst also providing them with high quality secondary school education'. Without further details it's not immediately clear exactly what organisation the commenter was referring to, and given Aspire Academy seems to be active in Qatar, I will not consider it further here.
- Ultimately, I am of the view that the Commission can reasonably form the opinion in relation to the proposed name that a voter is not likely to be misled as to the effect of their vote. A strong factor in coming to that view is that it is clear there are a number of organisations named 'Aspire' which may be active both in the borough of Tower Hamlets and wider. Because 'Aspire' is a generic and widely-used word, I think it is reasonable to conclude that it is not likely to be so associated with one particular organisation and therefore likely to mislead voters.

- Whilst each application is considered individually on the applicable facts and context, I have thought about the decision the Commission took to refuse to register the name 'Tower Hamlets Together' (see [application summary](#) and [registration note](#)) in terms of consistency. The circumstances there are different to here. The phrase 'Tower Hamlets Together' is much more specific than the generic word 'Aspire'.
- I have not considered further the Aspire spinal injury charity or recruitment agency as, whilst it may or may not be true that they are active in the borough, they appear to me to be active more widely than the borough. The charity indicates on their [website](#) that they are a national charity and the recruitment agency indicates on their [website](#) that they have offices in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Hong Kong and Singapore.
- Given that the Aspire programme run by Toynbee Hall appears to be specific to the borough, I have sought to give further consideration to it here. The 'Aspire' [web page](#) is part of the wider Toynbee Hall web page. Given that we have received public comments pointing to it from some people from Tower Hamlets, it is clear that some people from the borough are aware of the programme.
- Whilst the Aspire programme appears on the Toynbee Hall web-page (via a Google search) it's not immediately clear how active it currently is. I say that because on Toynbee Hall website the dates I have seen associated to the programme seem to be between 2012 and 2014. However, we should be a bit cautious about drawing a definitive conclusion regarding this as I am relying on what I have been able to find through open-source material on the internet. For example:
  - On the '[Evaluation](#)' page of Toynbee Hall, the most recent [document](#) I could see associated with the Aspire programme is from June 2013.
  - A search for 'Aspire Toynbee Hall' on Google produces the following [results](#) on the first page (see screen shot in Appendix F). All of the dates that appear associated with those search results on the first page are from 2011-2014.
  - The Google search results referenced above returns a result for an events page inviting people to the [Aspire graduation](#). The date listed on that page is 4 July 2013.
  - The [Aspire](#) page explains that the programme leads into another programme called 'Inspire'. The latest update on the [Inspire page](#) seems to be from 2013.
  - This [FAQ's page](#) links to a '[Key Dates](#)' page. That page refers to dates in relation to Aspire in 2013.

- Navigating from the Toynbee Hall home page, under the 'Projects' tab in the ['Youth' section](#) the programme 'Aspire' is not listed. On that page a programme called 'Make It!' is described as Toynbee Hall's flagship youth project.
- When I searched twitter for 'Aspire Toynbee Hall' the [results](#) suggested that the most recent tweet was in 2013 (see screen shot in Appendix F).
- Against that is the fact that on this [Local Offer website](#) there is a reference to seeking participants in 'Lbth/ Youth And Community Service/ Aspire' and it indicates that the page was last updated on 9 August 2017.
- Based on what I have outlined in this section, I don't think the Commission could reasonably be satisfied to the 'likely' threshold that if Aspire appeared on a ballot paper a voter is likely to be misled.
- These representations do not change the Registration Team's view that the proposed name meets the test for registration.

#### Proposed emblem

- We have received representations regarding the similarity between the proposed emblem for Aspire and the emblems used by the deregistered party Tower Hamlets First. I have considered this here as part of the 'mislead' test.
- The emblems registered to Tower Hamlets First at deregistration can be viewed [here](#). The proposed emblem of Aspire is:



- Whilst both emblems do contain the image of a house they are not identical. Further, the proposed emblem includes the proposed name of the party. On that basis, I think the Commission could reasonably be satisfied that this meets the 'likely' threshold that a voter would be misled.
- Accordingly, these representations do not change the Registration Team's view that the proposed emblem meets the test for registration.

#### Alleged link between Tower Hamlets First and Aspire



- We received many representations about a link between the application and Lutfur Rahman and the deregistered party Tower Hamlets First. The Commission has been aware of these publically reported alleged links since the application was lodged. The assessment of this application has thus been undertaken with that as part of the context surrounding the application.
- The potential relevance of the submissions that we have received, as I see it, is to the requirement in s 26 that in order to be registered a party must have adopted a financial scheme which sets out the arrangements for regulating the financial affairs of the party for the purposes of PPERA.
- As set out below, we have had substantial correspondence with the applicant party's representatives on this issue. On the basis of the information provided to us, the Registration Team is of the view that the requirement in s 26 has been met for the reasons set out in the assessment.
- The representations do not add any new information and I have not considered them further. The representations do not change the Registration Team's view that the requirement in s 26 has been met.

## Party officers

- On 31 January 2017, in relation to the application to register the party under the name 'Tower Hamlets Together', the Commission spoke with the CEO of Tower Hamlets Council to ask if he had any specific knowledge of the party and any knowledge of any link between this party and Tower Hamlets First. A link to the note of that conversation can be found [here](#).
- The CEO provided the following information:
  - Most of what he had seen had been on social media which is difficult to verify.
  - The person listed as leader (Kalam Mahmud Abu Taher Choudhury) in the application [REDACTED] and was an agent for Tower Hamlets First in 2014.
  - The second and third persons listed in the email ([REDACTED] and Jahed Bokth Choudhury) were not known to him and [REDACTED]

- The fourth person listed in the email ([REDACTED]) [REDACTED]. The member of the Council is from the Tower Hamlets Independents group and is a former member of Tower Hamlets First.
- The article below includes some information about some of the persons named in the application:
  - <http://lovewapping.org/2017/02/first-details-tower-hamlets-together-officers-emerge/>
- The current application has removed [REDACTED] as an additional officer, and replaced [REDACTED] as the nominating officer with Lilian Collins.
- I can find no mention of Lilian Collins in Richard Mawrey QC's judgement in relation to the 2014 Election Petition.
- Ms Collins was the Chair of the Poplar Baths Steering group.<sup>1</sup> A redevelopment of the Poplar Baths was initiated under former Mayor Lutfur Rahman.<sup>2</sup> Ms Collins was also a labour member for some time.<sup>3</sup>

## Correspondence history in relation to this application

- As mentioned above, the party originally unsuccessfully applied to register under the name of 'Tower Hamlets Together'. After receipt of that application, we wrote to the party on [10 February 2017](#) inviting them to meet with the Commission to gather explanation and evidence in relation to their application.
- The party indicated on 14 February 2017 that they were currently unable to meet with the Commission because the treasurer was unwell and asked for the meeting to take place in March 2017. The Commission responded on [15 February 2017](#) agreeing to hold the meeting in March, and indicating that we would proceed to assess those aspects of the application unrelated to the meeting.
- On [23 February 2017](#) we wrote to the party advising that the application to register Tower Hamlets Together had been rejected because the party name did not meet the statutory test for registration. In that correspondence we said that

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.eastlondonadvertiser.co.uk/news/residents-and-council-bosses-learn-more-about-36million-regeneration-plans-in-stepney-1-1988024>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.eastlondonlines.co.uk/2013/01/regeneration-of-poplar-baths-soon-to-begin/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/teamwhitechapel/posts/1387935214764713>

there was no need for a meeting on 21 March, but if the party submitted a fresh application it was likely we'd want to meet with the party.

- On 30 March 2017 the Commission acknowledged receipt of a new application from the party to register 'Democratic Coalition'. During an email exchange between [30 March and 2 June 2017](#) the Commission arranged to meet with the party about their application on 27 June 2017.
- The Commission met with representatives of the party on 27 June 2017. A note of the meeting can be found here ([internal version](#) and [external version provided to party](#)). The documents provided by the party at that meeting can be viewed [here](#).
- The party then lodged an [application](#) on 30 June 2017 (please note that the date stamp on the application is incorrect) to register the party 'Aspire', along with a [constitution](#) and [financial scheme](#).
- On [1 August 2017](#), the Registration Team wrote to the party setting out comments it proposed to include in the assessment and asking for comment.
- On [17 August 2017](#), we received correspondence from the party's representative Bindmans LLP asking for clarity on a number of points.
- We responded on [25 August 2017](#) providing further information in relation to the points raised. This email summarises why the Commission had expressed concern that the party had not adopted its financial scheme.
- The party's representatives wrote to the Commission on 15 September 2017 making representations in relation to the process and including the following documents:
  - [Covering letter](#)
  - [Financial scheme](#)
  - [Constitution](#)
  - [Expenditure procedures](#)
  - [Memo from Treasurer on controls and procedures](#)
  - [Donations form](#)

- [Procedures re: submission to Commission](#)
- [Procedures for dealing with donations](#)
- Legal advice in relation to the representations from Bindmans LLP can be viewed [here](#).
- We wrote back to the party on [5 October 2017](#), responding to their representations and setting out the next steps in relation to this application.
- On 6 [October 2017](#), we received correspondence from the party's representatives making submissions in relation to the process the Commission was following in dealing with the application.
- On [10 October 2017](#), we responded confirming there had been no undue delay in relation the application. We also outlined how the application to be registered would proceed.
- On [17 October 2017](#), we wrote to Bindmans LLP to confirm that we had approved the draft financial scheme. We asked that the party provide further evidence that they had adopted their financial scheme. It was agreed this would be done by 14 November.
- On [14 November 2017](#), the party's representatives provided a letter from [REDACTED] demonstrating a bank account had been opened. Bindmans LLP said that the party had not yet received any funds as a party in their [email accompanying this letter](#).
- On 30 November 2017, we wrote to the party's representatives to mention that we had noted that the financial scheme specifies that the party will not take loans or other regulated transactions. Bindmans LLP responded on [1 December](#) to confirm that this is what the party had intended.
- On [8 December 2017](#) we contacted Bindmans LLP to advise that details of the party's application had now been published on the Commission's website.

## Constitution and Financial scheme

Constitution - [link](#)

Paragraph 5(1) (a), Schedule 4 of PPERA prescribes that a party must submit with their application to be registered a copy of their constitution. Section 26(9) of PPERA says that a constitution is the document or documents by which the structure and organisation of the party is determined. Accordingly, the constitution must set out sufficient detail to show the structure and organisation of the party.

I am of the view that the Commission **can** be satisfied that the constitution included with the application meets those requirements because:

- The constitution should reflect which register the party are applying to register in.
  - The constitution does not specifically refer to the party wishing to be registered on the Great Britain register. However, it does refer to its operation in Tower Hamlets, which accords with the party's application to be registered on the Great Britain register.
- The party's aims and objectives.
  - The party's objectives are set in section 3 and the party's aims are set out in section 4.
- A reference to an intention to stand candidates and at which elections.
  - One of the objectives of the party is to secure the election of Aspire members as councillors on Tower Hamlets Council and any other Relevant Area (see paragraph 3.1(a)).
- The candidate selection process (or at least a statement that the party will have one).
  - The selection of candidates to stand in elections is set out in section 17.
- The structure of the party and who is responsible for managing the party, including the responsibility of the party officers, the terms of office and procedure for change of those officers.
  - The organisation of the party is set out in section 6. That section says that an Executive Board will be responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of the party.
  - The membership of the Executive Board and the Board's responsibility is set out in section 9.
  - The Officers of the party and their roles is set out in section 7. The selection of those officers and their terms of office are also set out in that section.

- How the party will make and record decisions, as well as any other governance arrangements. For example the frequency, timing and type of meetings and the quorum for meetings.
  - The frequency and structure of meetings of the Executive Board is set out in section 9. Paragraph 7.2(c) also sets out that the role of the Secretary is to maintain minutes of meetings.
- If the party has membership, and if so the process and rules governing that membership.
  - The membership rules are set out in section 5.
- That the party have adopted its financial scheme.
  - The constitution does not expressly state that the party has adopted its financial scheme.
  - Section 10 in the constitution deals with the finances of the party. It makes reference to the party's financial scheme
- How the constitution can be changed and the process for dissolution of the party.
  - Alteration to the party's constitution is dealt with in section 20. There is nothing specific in the constitution that I have identified with regard to dissolution of the party.
- The constitution and financial scheme must also be consistent with each other.
  - I am not aware of any inconsistencies with the financial scheme.

I am satisfied that this constitution meets our requirements. This is because it covers all of the topics outlined above and fairly comprehensively.

#### **Financial scheme - [link](#)**

- I have reviewed the financial scheme, and the other documents provided by the party. I am satisfied that the party have adopted their financial scheme. I have set out below how I came to this conclusion.

#### **Additional documents and previous assessment of the financial scheme**

- The party's financial scheme has been approved by the Commission—[decision record](#). It was not considered to be inconsistent with the constitution during this assessment. We looked at the other documents and financial scheme in our [completeness check](#).

- On 15 September 2017, the party, through their representatives, provided the following documents (along with a revised constitution and financial scheme):
  - [Covering letter](#)
  - [Expenditure procedures](#)
  - [Memo from Treasurer on controls and procedures](#)
  - [Donations form](#)
  - [Procedures re: submission to Commission](#)
  - [Procedures for dealing with donations](#)
- The documents appear to me to be fairly comprehensive in terms of PPERA requirements. I have not identified any inconsistency with the rules in PPERA.
- The documents were also reviewed by the [REDACTED] (see email [here](#)) and [REDACTED] (see email [here](#)). Neither identified any significant issues in relation to the procedures.
- The Commission's Financial Controller made the following comments:
 

*Having read through these they look pretty average. The only noticeable things that weren't there are:*

  - VAT – are they registered?
  - Staffing – will staff be salaried, consultants, how will this be shown in the accounts, IR35 could play a part here as well.
  - Procurement – it only states that the Treasurer and campaigns manager can agree purchases but nothing about the different levels of procurement say

*– getting 3 quotes if over £5000 etc.*

*They are not show stoppers but it would certainly make auditing easier and clearer.*

- None of the issues raised appear to me to specifically relate to PPERA compliance.
- The Financial Reporting Manager raised the following points:
- Campaigns officer – the party have not applied to register a campaigns officer. The [financial scheme](#) as drafted at paragraph 10.3 refers to the Treasurer (or Campaigns Officer if one is appointed or registered) taking action to comply with campaign expenditure rules.
  - The financial procedure documents refer to a campaigns officer on several occasions. For example, see [expenditure procedures](#) at paragraphs 2.2 -2.4, 3.2, 5.1, 5.4; [memo from Treasurer on controls and procedures](#) at paragraph 3.1; [procedures re: submission to Commission](#) at paragraphs 7.1(e), 8.1(d) and 8.2.
  - There are points in those documents where, if the party had a campaigns officer post we would expect to see them referenced instead of the treasurer. For example, [expenditure procedures](#) paragraph 5.4 and [procedures re: submission to Commission](#) at paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3.
  - However, the documents appear to me to be consistent with the party's application in that they have not, at this time, applied to register a campaigns officer. Further, paragraph 3.2 of [expenditure procedures](#) demonstrates that the party understand that if they appoint a campaigns officer or deputy campaigns officer, any reference to the treasurer's or deputy treasurer's duties in relation to campaign expenditure should be read as duties of the campaigns officer or deputy campaigns officer.
  - Paragraph 6.1 of [procedures re: submission to Commission](#) indicates that the party do not intend to contest a UK parliamentary election, European election, Scottish Parliament election or national assembly of Wales election. That paragraph says that the financial procedures will be updated if the party does decide to contest such an election.
- Aggregation – in several instances the financial procedure documents provided by the party refer to a donation aggregation threshold of £500. For example, see [procedures for dealing with donations](#) at paragraphs 2.21, 13.5, 24 and [donations form](#) in the first sentence and box 4.
- The PPERA reporting rules apply only to donations that aggregate to over £7,500 from the same source in the same calendar year (and after that donations that add up to over £1,500 in that calendar year that come from a



source already reported). As the procedures amount to over compliance with PPERA, rather than under-compliance this does not appear to be a barrier to registration.

- Auditor – the financial procedure documents refer to the party instructing an auditor to audit the party's statement of accounts. See for example [procedures re: submission to Commission](#) at paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3, and [financial scheme](#) at paragraph 7.2.
  - There is not specific mention in any of the documents, including the financial scheme or constitution that the auditor must be a qualified auditor (taking into account the requirements of s 160(2)) if the accounts are being audited in compliance with s 43 of PPERA (where the gross income or expenditure exceeds £250,000).
  - Taking a proportionate approach, this does not appear to me to be a significant issue. The [model financial scheme](#) that the Commission makes available to parties does not itself mention this specifically.
  - I did not see a reference in the financial procedure documents to the requirement to audit a campaign spending return over £250,000 (note that it is in the [financial scheme](#) at paragraph 10.2). However, as mentioned above it appears the party does not intend to contest an election where such a campaign spending return would be required to be delivered.
- On [14 November 2017](#) representatives of the party indicated that the party had opened a bank account. They attached a [letter](#) from [REDACTED] bank dated 11 November 2017 addressed to 'The Officials, Aspire Tower Hamlets'. They also indicated that they were instructed that the party is yet to receive or deal with any funds as a party, as they are waiting for Electoral Commission approval and registration before beginning to operate as a party.
- The party indicated at the meeting of 27 June 2017 that the party had engaged the assistance of an accountant. At that meeting they provided a [letter from](#) [REDACTED] (see page 41) dated 21 June 2017 indicating that [REDACTED] had accepted the invitation to be appointed as accountant and financial advisor to the party. The letter sets out the assistance that [REDACTED] had agreed to provide the party. Whilst circumstances have progressed since the meeting of 27 June 2017, the party have not indicated that those arrangements are no longer in place and therefore I assume they remain.

**Below I have outlined the parts of the scheme which require the party to take actions in regards to their reporting requirements. I have reviewed the scheme and it's consistency with the wider application and information provided by the party.**

- 1.1 of the scheme says the financial scheme sets out how the party will organise its financial affairs to comply with PPERA.
  - This is not contradicted by the additional documents the party have provided us.
  - [Covering letter](#) – In the letter from the party’s legal representatives, they say that the party will adopt the financial scheme once the draft scheme has been approved by the Commission.
- 6.1 States that the treasurer is responsible for the whole party’s compliance with PPERA.
  - [Procedures re: submission to Commission](#) – This confirms the treasurers responsibility in this respect.
- 7.4 Says that the treasurer will put in place arrangements to ensure the Statement of Accounts (SoA) are prepared, audited, and submitted by the deadline and that they will put in place accounting processes capable of meeting the Acts accounting record keeping requirements.
  - [Procedures re: submission to Commission](#) – This sets out what the treasurer will do throughout the year to achieve the requirements of the financial scheme.
- 8.2 sets out the information the party will gather in regard to any to donations of more than £500 they receive and the checks they will do on donations.
  - [Procedures re: submission to Commission](#) – This sets out what the treasurer will do throughout the year to achieve the requirements of the financial scheme.
  - [Donations form](#) – This form allows the party to record all of the information that their financial scheme requests for donations. This form is comprehensive and goes beyond what is set out in the financial scheme.
  - [Procedures for dealing with donations](#) – this is a guidance document to accompany the donations form to enable the treasurer to act in accordance with the scheme. It appears to be comprehensive.
- 9.1 Says the party will not take any loans.
  - [Procedures re: submission to Commission](#) – This document outlines the submissions the party must make to the Commission. Donations returns are specifically mentioned, but the transactions return is not mentioned.

- We wrote to the party on 30 November 2017 noting that the financial scheme only mentioned loans but not other types of regulated transactions. We indicated that the scheme as currently drafted means that the party cannot currently enter into any kind of loan or regulated transaction set out in Part IVA of PPERA. That includes loans, bank overdrafts, securities, credit cards, credit facilities etc. The party's representatives confirmed on [1 December](#) that was the party's intention.
- Despite not taking any loans, the party would still need to provide nil transactions and loans return for at least the first 4 quarters until they are exempt. Further, were the party to make use of loan facilities (loans, bank overdrafts, securities, credit cards, credit facilities etc.) they would be in breach of their financial scheme and would no longer be adopting it. These points are not specifically referred to in the financial scheme; however, I am of the view that such does not undermine the adoption of the financial scheme or prevent registration of the party.
- Should the party be registered, we will write to them to make clear that they must deliver transactions and loans returns in accordance with PPERA unless exempt. We will also advise the party that they must apply to amend their financial scheme if in future the party does intend to engage in regulated transactions, and do so successfully prior to engaging in such transactions.
- 10.3 Outlines the requirements of the treasurer for campaign expenditure made on behalf of the party.
  - [Procedures re: submission to Commission](#) – This document outlines the party's campaign expenditure return submission requirement. It makes clear that the party will not be participating in the types of elections that will require this return but that this will be updated were this to change.
  - [Expenditure procedures](#) – This outlines the procedures for reporting campaign expenditure. It covers this in detail.
- 13 Says that the party will ensure it meets the requirements when changing registered details.
  - [Procedures re: submission to Commission](#) – This outlines the same requirements as the financial scheme.
- 16 Says that the party will have processes in place to ensure compliance and that the treasurer will ensure all other officers and members have sufficient knowledge of their financial obligations.
  - The party have sent us a memo from the treasurer to all party officers setting out the party's legal obligations with the Commission. It emphasises the need to comply with their financial scheme and to direct any issues

to the treasurer. This document suggests that the treasurer has a good understanding of the requirements and that the other officers and wider party have been informed of the requirements of the financial scheme. It also links to our guidance for some types of returns. [Memo](#).

- The party have provided us a procedures document setting out how they will internally meet their reporting obligations. I am confident that this document sufficiently sets out how the party will report. [Procedures](#).
- **Conclusion** – The additional information provided by the party supports that that party has the procedures in place to comply with their financial scheme. I am satisfied that the party have gone to some lengths to ensure that they have structures in place to comply with the legislative requirements. This includes setting up a bank account, devising internal financial procedures and controls, and acquiring the services of an accounting firm. I am therefore satisfied that the party have adopted their financial scheme.

## Recommendation

In making my recommendation I have considered the requirements and statutory tests set out in the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA).

I recommend that the following identity marks be **approved** and entered onto the register of political parties in Great Britain.

- Aspire



I recommend that the following identity marks be **rejected** for the reasons as set out in this assessment.

- Hope | Ambition | Delivery
- Progress | Fairness | United Tower Hamlets

- We Can Together
- Aspiration for All
- Your Anti-Austerity Candidate
- Progressive Alliance
- Hope for All
- Grassroots Movement
- Hope | Progress | One Tower Hamlets
- Stronger Together
- Ye are Many / You are Many
- The Anti-Austerity Party

A summary of the searches for similarity are included in **Appendix D**.

  
**27 November 2017**

# Appendix A: Proposed Name

**Proposed name: Aspire**

**Recommendation: Approve**

- 1.1 In making my recommendation to approve the proposed party name I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.
- 1.2 The proposed name is not the same as that of a party which is already registered in the register in which that party is applying to be registered.
- 1.3 I searched the register to examine whether this proposed name is likely to cause a voter to confuse it with another already registered identity mark or one that is protected after deregistration. This word does not appear on the register.
- 1.4 I searched for identity marks containing synonyms<sup>4</sup> for this word and I have set out the most similar identity marks below:
  - 'Great Aspirations. Great Britain.'<sup>5</sup>
  - 'if you strive to become independent'<sup>6</sup>
  - 'Seeking an Ideal Bradford'<sup>7</sup>
  - 'Seeking fair and affordable insurance'<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.thesaurus.com/browse/aspire>

<sup>5</sup> A description of 'The Just Political Party'

<sup>6</sup> A description of 'Autarchic Party'

<sup>7</sup> A description of 'Ideal Bradford'

<sup>8</sup> A description of 'National Flood Prevention Party'

1.4.1 As you can see, the registered descriptions are not similar to the proposed name. This is particularly visually where the proposed is very different. I think because of this visual difference it is very unlikely the proposed name would likely cause a voter confusion.

1.4.2 There is a registered description 'Great Aspiration, Great Britain', that includes the word 'Aspiration'. Although this word is similar to Aspire, I do not think they are particularly visually similar due to it not being the same word, and the registered description containing 3 other words. I would also suggest that the word 'Aspiration' has different context in the description because of the other words. I think this provides enough difference between the name and the registered description.

1.4.3 I am therefore satisfied that the proposed name is not likely to result in electors confusing that party with a party which is already registered in respect of the relevant part of the United Kingdom.

1.5 The proposed name is not more than six words.

1.6 The proposed name is not offensive. The proposed name is not obscene.

1.7 The proposed name does not include words the publication of which would be likely to amount to the commission of an offence.

1.8 I am satisfied that the proposed name is not likely, were it to appear on a ballot paper issued at an election to result in an elector being misled as to the effect of their vote.

1.8.1 There are a some services and organisations in the borough of Tower Hamlets that use the word aspire<sup>9</sup>:

- Aspire – Toynbee Hall youth project. Supports young people to become more active members of the community.<sup>10</sup>
- Aspire College – Offers courses for adult students. Their head office is in Tower Hill, which is on the border of the borough of Tower Hamlets. Their website says they have campuses across the UK.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup><https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=aspire+tower+hamlets&oq=aspire+tow&aqs=chrome.69i59l2j0j69i57j69i60l2.1735j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8> – internet search for 'aspire tower hamlets'

<sup>10</sup><http://www.toynbeehall.org.uk/aspire>

- 1.8.2 The Commissions applies a wide test in relation to ‘misleading the voter’. I have considered the broader context of the use of the word ‘Aspire’ for two groups in Tower Hamlets.
- 1.8.3 I am not particularly concerned that the existence of the youth project is likely to result in voters being misled. Although the party and the youth project have the same name, I think it unlikely that the a voter would be misled as to the effect of their vote by thinking the party was working with or endorsing, or endorsed by this youth service. It is a single program run by and from Toynbee Hall.<sup>12</sup> It is clear this is limited to this venue and not active across the borough. I think it is reasonable to assume that most voters in Tower Hamlets will not have heard of this group because, as far as I am aware, it is not active across the borough. Those that have heard of this group would likely be aware of its ‘Aspire’ programme run by Toynbee Hall. As far as I am aware, having looked at their website, there is no connection between this group and the proposed party or the council.
- 1.8.4 The Aspire College does not have exactly the same name as the applicant, and I think this helps differentiate it from the proposed party. As mentioned on the College’s website, the head office is in Tower Hamlets.<sup>13</sup> It appears from the website that this is also a campus and courses are run from this building.<sup>14</sup> Although the college operates in the borough, it is clearly not active across the borough, as this is its only campus in Tower Hamlets. It is actively is not confined to Tower Hamlets as it operates in a number of other cities as well as other parts of London . I can find no evidence of this college working formally with the Council. I think this, and the different name makes it less likely a voter would be misled that this college is connected to, or endorsing or endorsed by the proposed party.
- 1.8.5 I have searched for the college’s record on Companies House which can be found [here](#). Their accounts as at 30 September 2016 submitted to Companies House, which are the most recent accounts filed, appear to show that they are active. The Companies House record shows that the company was incorporated in 2011.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.aspirecollege.co.uk/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.toynbeehall.org.uk/our-history>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.aspirecollege.co.uk/aspire-campus>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.aspirecollege.co.uk/blank-xcwoa>



1.8.6 The word 'Aspire' is used extensively by a number of organisations more broadly than focused on Tower Hamlets.<sup>15</sup> Its use is varied, ranging from digital and media and marketing recruiter, estate agents, spinal cord injury charity, a vaping company etc. Due to the number of organisations that use this word as their name, and the varied nature of these organisations, it is unlikely in my view that the word would be associated with a particular group.

1.8.7 I am satisfied that, although there is a potential for the proposed name to mislead voters as to the effect of their vote, I do not think it is likely for the reasons set out above.

1.9 I am satisfied that the proposed name does not contradict, or hinder an elector's understanding of, any directions for his guidance in voting given on the ballot paper or elsewhere.

1.10 The proposed name does not include any script other than Roman script

1.11 The proposed name does not include any word or expression prohibited by order made by the Secretary of State.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=aspire&oq=aspire&aqs=chrome..69i57j69i60l3j0l2.1926j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

# Appendix B: Proposed descriptions

## **Proposed description 1: Hope | Ambition | Delivery**

### **Recommendation: Reject**

- 2.1 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.
- 2.2 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.
- 2.2.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name. Although the words 'Hope' and 'Ambition' are broadly synonymous with 'Aspire', I think this connection with the identity of the party is not particularly strong. I do not think a reasonable voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.
- 2.3 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

## **Proposed description 2: Progress | Fairness | United Tower Hamlets**

### **Recommendation: Reject**

- 2.4 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.
- 2.5 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.5.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name, and does not identify the party in any other way.

2.6 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

### **Proposed description 3: We Can Together**

#### **Recommendation: Reject**

2.7 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

2.8 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.8.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name, and does not identify the party in any other way.

2.9 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

### **Proposed description 4: Aspiration for All**

#### **Recommendation: Reject**

2.10 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

2.11 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.11.1 The proposed description contains most of the party name 'Aspire' in the word 'Aspiration'. However, I am not satisfied that this identifies the party, because I think it likely that most parties would agree with the sentiment of this slogan. It is very generic and would likely apply to most if not all of the other parties that it would appear alongside on the ballot paper.

2.12 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

### **Proposed description 5: Your Anti-Austerity Candidate**

#### **Recommendation: Reject**

2.13 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

2.14 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.14.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name, and does not identify the party in any other way.

2.15 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

### **Proposed description 6: Progressive Alliance**

#### **Recommendation: Reject**

2.16 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

2.17 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.17.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name, and does not identify the party in any other way.

2.18 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

### **Proposed description 7: Hope for All**

#### **Recommendation: Reject**

2.19 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

2.20 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.20.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name, and does not identify the party in any other way. Although it contains the word 'Hope' which is broadly synonymous with 'aspire', I think this connection with the identity of the party is not particularly strong. I do not think a reasonable voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.21 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

#### **Proposed description 8: Grassroots Movement**

##### **Recommendation: Reject**

2.22 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

2.23 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.23.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name, and does not identify the party in any other way.

2.24 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

#### **Proposed description 9: Hope | Progress | One Tower Hamlets**

##### **Recommendation: Reject**

2.25 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

2.26 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.26.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name, and does not identify the party in any other way. Although it contains the word 'Hope' which is broadly synonymous with 'aspire', I think this

connection with the identity of the party is not particularly strong. I do not think a reasonable voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.27 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

#### **Proposed description 10: Stronger Together**

##### **Recommendation: Reject**

2.28 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

2.29 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.29.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name, and does not identify the party in any other way.

2.30 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

#### **Proposed description 11: Ye are Many / You are Many**

##### **Recommendation: Reject**

2.31 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

2.32 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.32.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name, and does not identify the party in any other way.

2.33 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.

### **Proposed description 12: The Anti-Austerity Party**

#### **Recommendation: Reject**

2.34 In making my recommendation to reject the proposed description I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

2.35 I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description as I do not believe that a voter would be able to recognise the party from the proposed description.

2.35.1 The proposed description does not contain any part of the proposed name, and does not identify the party in any other way.



2.36 As I am not satisfied that the proposed description constitutes a satisfactory description, I have not considered it fully against the statutory tests. If the decision maker disagrees that it does not constitute a satisfactory description, then I will undertake to fully assess this description.



# Appendix C: Proposed emblems

**Proposed emblem**

**Recommendation:** Approve

Ballot paper size, 2cm <sup>2</sup>	5cm <sup>2</sup> for review and assessment
	

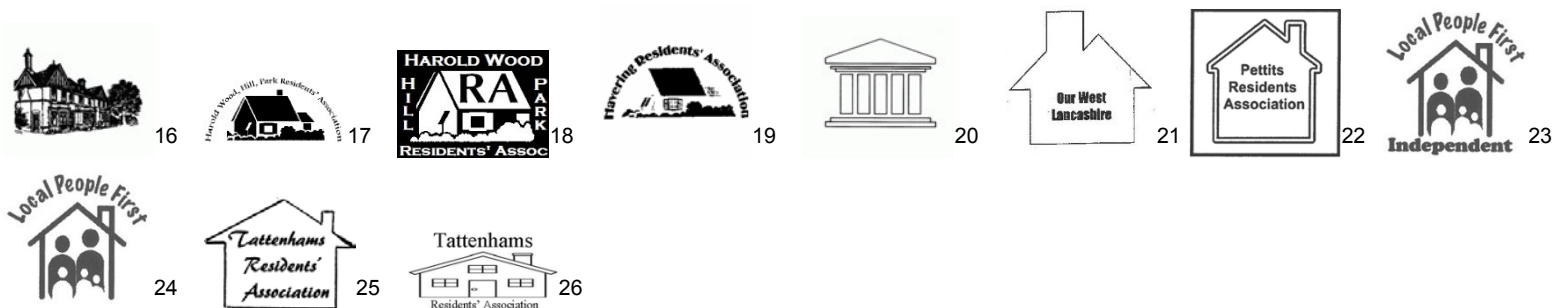
3.1 In making my recommendation to approve the proposed party emblem I have considered the issues set out in the following paragraphs.

3.2 The emblem does meet our minimum requirement to be an emblem by containing some designed or pictorial element.

3.3 The text used in the emblem does meet our minimum requirements to ensure that it is legible for voters.

3.4 The proposed emblem is not the same as that of a party which is already registered in the register in which that party is applying to be registered.

3.5 I searched the register to examine whether this proposed emblem is likely to cause a voter to confuse it with another already registered identity mark or one that is protected after deregistration. I have set out all emblems on the register that contain an image of a house below:



3.5.1 There are clearly a large number of house emblems on the register. The proposed emblem has a different style to the emblems set out above. The proposed emblem contains the party name in the same way that a number of the emblems above do. Accordingly, I do not think the proposed emblem is any more likely to be confusing with any of the above emblems, as they are to be confusing with each other.

3.5.2 I am therefore satisfied that the proposed emblem is not likely to result in electors confusing that party with a party which is already registered in respect of the relevant part of the United Kingdom.

3.6 The proposed emblem is not offensive. The proposed emblem is not obscene.

3.7 The proposed emblem does not include words the publication of which would be likely to amount to the commission of an offence.

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<sup>16</sup> Ewell Court Residents Association  
<sup>17</sup> Harold Wood Hill Park Residents' Association  
<sup>18</sup> Harold Wood Hill Park Residents' Association  
<sup>19</sup> Havering Residents Association  
<sup>20</sup> Merton Park Ward Independent Residents  
<sup>21</sup> Our West Lancashire  
<sup>22</sup> Pettits Residents Association  
<sup>23</sup> Solihull and Meriden Residents Association  
<sup>24</sup> Solihull and Meriden Residents Association  
<sup>25</sup> Tattenhams Residents' Association  
<sup>26</sup> Tattenhams Residents' Association

- 3.8 I am satisfied that the proposed emblem is not likely, were it to appear on a ballot paper issued at an election to result in an elector being misled as to the effect of their vote.
- 3.8.1 As the emblem contains the party name, I have considered it for the same reasons set out in Appendix A for this test.
- 3.8.2 I have also considered this against a number of estate agents in London that use 'Aspire' as their name, or in their name. I have considered this because the emblem contains a house and there is a potential for this to mislead voters into thinking there is a connection between the proposed emblem and an estate agents because of the link to property. I think this link to be tenuous at best, and don't think it meets the threshold to be likely to mislead a voter. I also note that there are a number of emblems already on the register that include the imagery of a house.
- 3.8.3 I do not consider this emblem likely to mislead a voter as to the effect of their vote.
- 3.9 I am satisfied that the proposed emblem does not contradict, or hinder an elector's understanding of, any directions for his guidance in voting given on the ballot paper or elsewhere.
- 3.10 The proposed emblem does not include any word or expression prohibited by order made by the Secretary of State.

# Appendix D – Searches for the same or similar names and descriptions

**Table D1: Similarity score results**

The following table lists those identifiers that were found to be similar to by an electronic matching process. The higher the value the higher the similarity between the proposed descriptions and the identifier listed below.

Proposed identity marks	Similar identifiers	Party Name of similar identifiers (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)	Similarity
Aspire	The British Empire Party	The British Empire Party	0.5887
Hope   Ambition   Delivery			0.0000
Progress   Fairness   United Tower Hamlets			0.0000
We Can Together	Together We Can Reform	Together We Can Reform	0.9524
	Because we can make Britain Better	British National Party	0.6147
	Because we can make Scotland Better	British National Party	0.6147
	Because we can make Wales better	British National Party	0.6147
	Working together for an ideal Bradford	Ideal Bradford	0.5046
Aspiration for All	For All, For England	English Futures Party	0.5070
	Great Aspirations. Great Britain.	The Just Political Party	0.5057
	Global Co-operation for England	English Futures Party	0.5031
Your Anti-Austerity Candidate	No Austerity	Old Swan Against the Cuts	0.5345

Proposed identity marks	Similar identifiers	Party Name of similar identifiers (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)	Similarity
	End Austerity	Old Swan Against the Cuts	0.5000
Progressive Alliance	Progressive Party	Progressive Party	0.8057
	Scottish Progressives	Progressive Party	0.6237
	English Progressives	Progressive Party	0.6151
	Welsh Progressives	Progressive Party	0.6151
	British Progressives	Progressive Party	0.6151
Hope for All			0.0000
Grassroots Movement			0.0000
Hope   Progress   One Tower Hamlets			0.0000
Stronger Together	Let's all be stronger together	Alliance for London	0.8734
	Strong Voice for Scotland in Europe	Scottish National Party (SNP)	0.5071
	Stronger for Scotland	Unity Scotland - The Unity Party	0.5070
Ye are Many / You are Many			0.0000
The Anti-Austerity Party	No Austerity	Old Swan Against the Cuts	0.5467
	The Justice & Anti-Corruption Party	The Justice & Anti-Corruption Party	0.5211
	End Austerity	Old Swan Against the Cuts	0.5113

**Tables D2 Party identity marks that contain words that appear in the proposed identity marks**

**Words that when searched, do not appear on the register:**

- Aspire
- Ambition
- Tower
- Hamlets
- Grassroots

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'hope'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
Your hope: Europe	Alliance EPP: European People's Party UK
Westerhope First	Newcastle upon Tyne Community First Party
Tommy Sheridan - Solidarity - Hope Over Fear	Solidarity - Scotland's Socialist Movement
Hope Over Fear	Solidarity - Scotland's Socialist Movement

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'delivery'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
A Better Way to Delivery Justice	A Better Way to Govern

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'together'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
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<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'together'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
Romsley Together	Romsley Together
Together We Can Reform	Together We Can Reform
Temple and Farringdon Together	Temple and Farringdon Together
Let's all be stronger together	Alliance for London
Christians Together	Christian Party "Proclaiming Christ's Lordship"
Together for a peaceful prosperous Europe	Common Good
Working Together, Living Together, For England	English Futures Party
Striving together for governance with integrity	Farnham Residents
Working together for an ideal Bradford	Ideal Bradford
Working together to make Bradford ideal	Ideal Bradford
Our Future Together Seaham Community Party	Seaham Community Party
Putting Our Country Back Together Again	United Kingdom Unionist Party

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'we can'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
Together We Can Reform	Together We Can Reform
Because we can make Britain Better	British National Party
Because we can make Scotland Better	British National Party
Because we can make Wales better	British National Party

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word aspiration</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
Great Aspirations. Great Britain.	The Just Political Party

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'austerity'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
Unite against austerity, discrimination & sectarianism	Cross-Community Labour Alternative
End austerity, fracking, discrimination & sectarianism	Cross-Community Labour Alternative
People Before Profit - No to Austerity	Lewisham People Before Profit
No Austerity	Old Swan Against the Cuts
End Austerity - Old Swan Against Cuts	Old Swan Against the Cuts
End Austerity	Old Swan Against the Cuts
For socialism. Against austerity and war.	Socialist Equality Party

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'progressive'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
Progressive Party	Progressive Party
Scottish Progressives	Progressive Party
English Progressives	Progressive Party
Welsh Progressives	Progressive Party
British Progressives	Progressive Party
Progressive Reform Party	Progressive Party
Progressive Unionist Party	Progressive Party
Progressive Unionist Reform Party	Progressive Party
Scottish Progressive Reform Party	Progressive Party
Liberal Unionist Progressive Party	Progressive Party
Progressive Unionist Party of Northern Ireland	Progressive Unionist Party of Northern Ireland



<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'alliance'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
Anti-Corruption Pro-Family Christian Alliance	War Veteran's Pro-Traditional Family Party
The Independents Alliance	The Independents Alliance
The Independents Alliance Candidate	The Independents Alliance
Deep Earth Ecosphere Preservation Alliance	Deep Earth Ecosphere Preservation Alliance
The Independent Political Alliance Party	The Independent Political Alliance Party
Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Alliance EPP: European People's Party UK	Alliance EPP: European People's Party UK
Alliance for Europe	Alliance for Europe
Alliance For Green Socialism	Alliance For Green Socialism
Alliance for London	Alliance for London
Bournemouth Independent Alliance	Bournemouth Independent Alliance
Christian Peoples Alliance	Christian Peoples Alliance
Citizens Independent Social Thought Alliance	Citizens Independent Social Thought Alliance
East Devon Alliance	East Devon Alliance
Equal Parenting Alliance	Equal Parenting Alliance
Harlow Alliance Party	Harlow Alliance Party
Independent Alliance North Lanarkshire	Independent Alliance North Lanarkshire
Motorcycle Alliance	Motorcycle Alliance
New United Kingdom Voters Alliance	New United Kingdom Voters Alliance
North of England Community Alliance	North of England Community Alliance
People Before Profit Alliance	People Before Profit Alliance
Scottish Democratic Alliance	Scottish Democratic Alliance
Socialist Alliance	Socialist Alliance

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'alliance'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
Stapleford Alliance	Stapleford Alliance
UK Yorkshire Socialist Alliance Party	UK Yorkshire Socialist Alliance Party
Alliance	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Alliance Party	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
The Alliance Party	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
The Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Alliance Works - Tribal Politics Doesn't	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Alliance Party - Shared Future	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Alliance Party First Candidate	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Alliance Party Second Candidate	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Alliance Party Third Candidate	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Cross-Community Alliance Party	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Liberal Alliance Party	Alliance - Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Alliance for Britain's 4 Freedoms Future	Alliance EPP: European People's Party UK
Alliance for Europe in Wales	Alliance for Europe
The Alliance for Europe Candidate	Alliance for Europe
Alliance For Green Socialism - Save NHS	Alliance For Green Socialism
Alliance for Green Socialism - Save Homes	Alliance For Green Socialism
Alliance For Green Socialism - Save Schools	Alliance For Green Socialism
Left Green Alliance	Alliance For Green Socialism
Christian Peoples Alliance - Cynghrair Pobl Gristnogol	Christian Peoples Alliance
Christian Peoples Alliance - Supporting Traditional Marriage	Christian Peoples Alliance
Independent East Devon Alliance	East Devon Alliance

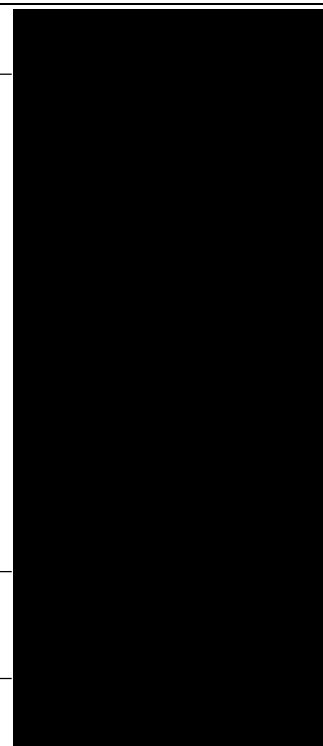
<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'alliance'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
East Devon Alliance of Independents	East Devon Alliance
East Devon Independent Alliance	East Devon Alliance
Alliance of East Devon Independents	East Devon Alliance
East Devon Alliance: Working for you	East Devon Alliance
The Harlow Alliance Party	Harlow Alliance Party
Alliance Party of Harlow	Harlow Alliance Party
The Alliance Party of Harlow	Harlow Alliance Party
Harlow Alliance Party (People's Initiative)	Harlow Alliance Party
Harlow Residents Alliance Party	Harlow Alliance Party
Harlow Action Alliance Party	Harlow Alliance Party
Alliance Party For Harlow	Harlow Alliance Party
The Alliance Party For Harlow	Harlow Alliance Party
Harlow Alliance Party People's Initiative (H.A.P.P.I.)	Harlow Alliance Party
Motorcycle Alliance	Motorcycle Alliance
Motorcycle Freedom Alliance	Motorcycle Alliance
Freedom Alliance	Motorcycle Alliance
Motoring Alliance	Motorcycle Alliance
Freedom of Movement Alliance	Motorcycle Alliance
Motor Alliance	Motorcycle Alliance
People Before Profit Alliance	People Before Profit Alliance
Populist Alliance	Populist Party
Scotland's Left Alliance	RISE - Respect, Independence, Socialism and Environmentalism

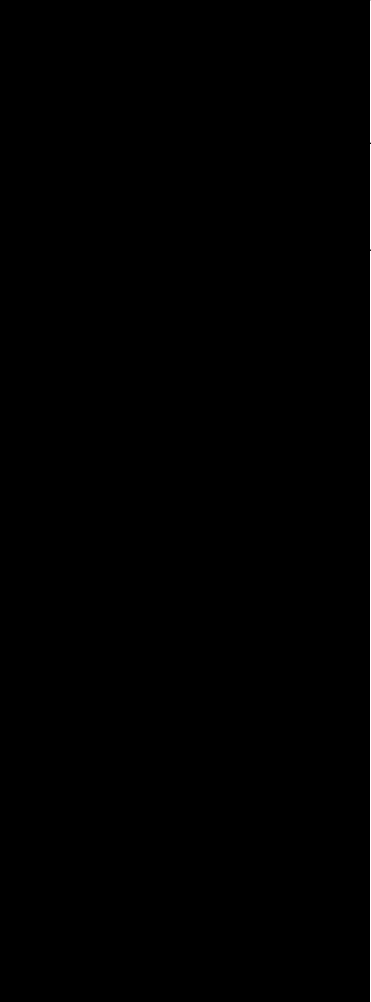

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'movement'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
Christian Movement for Great Britain	Christian Movement for Great Britain
Movement for Active Democracy (M.A.D.)	Movement for Active Democracy (M.A.D.)
Movement For Consensus	Movement For Consensus
Solidarity - Scotland's Socialist Movement	Solidarity - Scotland's Socialist Movement
Freedom of Movement Alliance	Motorcycle Alliance
Movement for Active Democracy	Movement for Active Democracy (M.A.D.)
Populist Movement	Populist Party
World Socialist Movement	The Socialist Party of Great Britain

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'stronger'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
Stronger for Scotland	Unity Scotland - The Unity Party
Let's all be stronger together	Alliance for London
English Democrats - "Stronger For England"	English Democrats
Scottish National Party – Stronger for Scotland	Scottish National Party (SNP)
Scottish Unionist Party, Stronger United	Scottish Unionist Party

<b>Party names and descriptions that contain the word 'many'</b>	<b>Party Name of the similar identifier (if the same indicates the similar identifier is a party name)</b>
For the betterment of the many	The Priority Party

## Appendix E – Comments received from members of the public

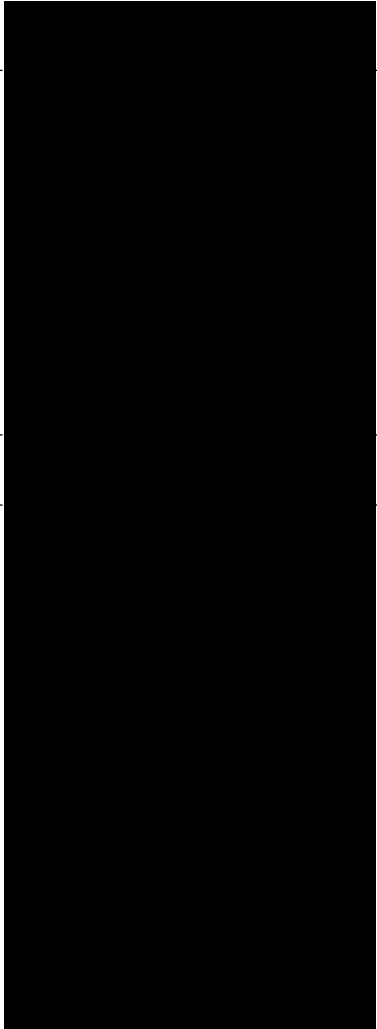



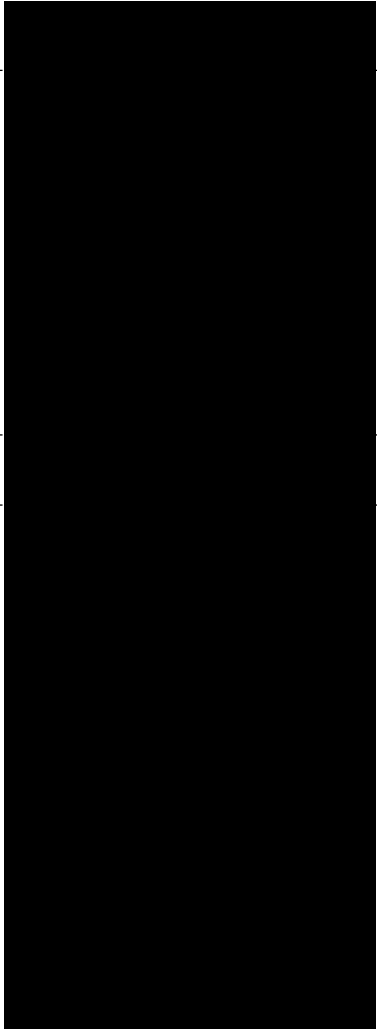
Commenter's name and link to comments in no particular order	Comments as they were provided to the Commission
	<p>■■■■■ comments are included in a letter in the link provided.</p>
	<p>No sooner had I mentioned this name in connection with the Rahman party, than somebody connected with a major charity came forward</p> <p><a href="https://www.aspire.org.uk/our-purpose">https://www.aspire.org.uk/our-purpose</a></p> <p>I understand that there are also legitimate organisations in Tower Hamlets with Aspire in their names who may be concerned.</p> <p>In view of this, the Commission may wish to extend the consultation to gather further evidence on misuse of this name</p>
	<p>■■■■■ uses Aspire recruitment regularly. ■■■ is approaching them as they recruit in the borough</p>
	<p>The problem is that members of the public do not study websites. Since I emailed yesterday another charity with ASPIRE in the name has come to light. This involves football</p>

	and Bahrain and has connections in Tower Hamlets
	I wish to object to the application of Inspire to be a political party on the grounds that it aims to commit serious criminal offences and as such is not an application to be a political party in the normal legal sense.
	Aspire is founded by the former corruptly elected ex-mayor of Tower Hamlets, Lutfur Rahman. He is barred from standing for public office since 2015.
	 . On January 2017 a local community website called Love Wapping ( <a href="http://www.lovwapping.org">www.lovwapping.org</a> ) published this news story ( <a href="http://lovwapping.org/2017/01/lutfur-rahman-makes-comeback-with-new-political-party-tower-hamlets-together/">http://lovwapping.org/2017/01/lutfur-rahman-makes-comeback-with-new-political-party-tower-hamlets-together/</a> ) about the attempt by Lutfur Rahman to register Tower Hamlets Together as a political party. A year later, the story was published ( <a href="http://lovwapping.org/2018/01/aspire-lutfur-rahman-latest-attempt-to-launch-new-political-party/">http://lovwapping.org/2018/01/aspire-lutfur-rahman-latest-attempt-to-launch-new-political-party/</a> ) about the attempt by Lutfur Rahman to register Aspire as a political party. The Aspire registration submission should be turned down and the permission to register should not be granted on the following grounds: Aspire is another attempt by Lutfur Rahman to further influence local politics in Tower Hamlets Aspire is a front for Lutfur Rahman's Tower Hamlets First group which was subject to numerous references by Justice Mawrey in his election petition judgment against Rahman Two of the three officers named in the Aspire application (Kalam Mahmud Abu Taher Choudhury and Jahed Bokth Choudhury) is the same close political allies of Lutfur Rahman as in the Tower Hamlets Together application, the third officer named in the Aspire application, Lillian Collins, is another close associate of Rahman. The fact that the core elements of the Aspire, Tower Hamlets Together and Tower Hamlets First logos are identical is of fundamental importance to the true identity of Aspire as the iconic representations some political parties is much more important than the party name itself. It would be easy to consider the reuse of the same house logo as a stupid mistake but in truth those submitting it have no choice. It cannot be changed. From all my information, experience and knowledge of how Lutfur Rahman's followers operate I firmly

	<p>believe that the Aspire party IS the same organization as Tower Hamlets Together which in turn is the same organization as Tower Hamlets First. Aspire is is nothing more than another poorly executed attempt by Lutfur Rahman and his followers to reinvigorate their corrupt methods ahead of the local and mayoral elections in May 2018 Can I also ask that in future more comprehensive details of registrations are made available to the public by yourselves which should include, as a minimum, the full names, and addresses of any proposed officers in addition to party logos? Regards</p>
	<p>This should be rejected on the grounds it is still the work of disgraced former mayor Lutfur Rahman.</p>
	<p>I object to Lutfur Rahman registering a new Political Party 'Aspire'. He was found guilty at the Royal Courts of Justice of "corrupt and illegal practices" His previous political party failed to abide by the rules for political parties (eg: it failed to keep any proper financial records) The judge at the Royal Courts of Justice said his Councillors appeared to lack any qualities other than loyalty to Lutfur Rahman</p>
	<p>Hi, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I understand that Lutfur Rahman is currently trying to register yet another Political Party, and I wish to object strongly and request that you refuse his request. Lutfur Rahman is the disgraced ex-Mayor of Tower Hamlets: 1) He was found guilty at the Royal Courts of Justice of "corrupt and illegal practices" 2) His previous political party ("Tower Hamlets First"?) was found by that Court not to have met the regulations for Political Parties. It kept no proper financial records. 3) He is currently banned from holding public office, but is still trying to get his henchmen elected to act on his behalf. 4) Within the last few months he has been struck off by the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal 5) There is a current criminal investigation by New Scotland Yard, and HMIC has reported that there is a credible prospect of bringing criminal charges for fraud and other crimes against Lutfur Rahman. In these circumstances Lutfur Rahman is clearly totally unfit to register a Political Party and I strongly request that no such registration is allowed. Yours sincerely, [REDACTED]</p>

	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
	<p>I wish to object to the registration of a new political party by Lutfur Rahman because he has been found guilty at the Royal Courts of Justice of corrupt and illegal practices, his previous political party failed to abide by the rules for political parties in that it failed to keep proper political records (and, allegedly, other fraudulent activities), and the Judge at The Royal Courts of Justice said that Lutfur Rahman's councillors appeared to lack any positive qualities apart from loyalty to Mr Rahman. It seems clear to me that Mr Rahman should therefore be barred from registering a new political party.</p>
	<p>I am writing to object to Lutfur Rahman being allowed to set up a new political party, on the following grounds: 1. He was found guilty at the Royal Courts of Justice of "corrupt and illegal practices" 2. His previous political party failed to abide by the rules for political parties (eg: it failed to keep any proper financial records) 3. The judge at the Royal Courts of Justice said his Councillors appeared to lack any qualities other than loyalty to Lutfur Rahman. Please reject his application Best wishes [REDACTED]</p>
	<p>[REDACTED] I have extreme objections to Luftur Rahman being allowed to register a new political party "Aspire". And as you know he has been found guilty of corrupt and illegal practices and has been barred from practising as a solicitor. During the time that he was active politically in LBTH his conduct was shocking &amp; corruption was rife. He is a dangerous man politically, and should not be encouraged by the Electoral Commission by being allowed to set up and register any new political party - particularly as it appears he is adopting the name of a pre-existing and respected organisation in Tower Hamlets.</p>
	<p>This party is lead by a struck off solicitor who also happens to the ex mayor who was kicked out of office . This is not what people should be aspiring too.</p>
	<p>Corrupt ousted ex mayor of tower hamlets. Continues to web deceit in a gullible</p>



	community. Barred from practising as solicitor. Second attempt to create political party flies in the face of integration and harmony within the community. This party should not be allowed
	Dear Electoral Commission,  , it gives me great concern to hear of yet another cynical attempt by the disgraced former mayor of Tower Hamlets Lutfur Rahman and his associates to flout the court rulings against their corruption and regain influence over local politics in Tower Hamlets via the back door. I fully support all the points made in <a href="http://lovewapping.org/2018/01/letter-to-electoral-commission-opposing-registration-of-aspire-party/">http://lovewapping.org/2018/01/letter-to-electoral-commission-opposing-registration-of-aspire-party/</a> and urge you in the strongest terms to reject the application of Aspire, and any future applications made by this group. Many thanks for your consideration of my comments! Regards,  
	This is a front for the corrupt ex-mayor luftur rahman
	<p>I would like to place an objection to the registration of a local, Tower Hamlets, political party under the name of Aspire. I understand that there is a proposal for one under this name from Lutfur Rahman, and ostensible leader Kalam Mohamed Abu Tahir Choudury and treasurer Jaketh Bokth Choudury.</p> <p>A great deal of the alleged corruption under Lutfur Rahman's regime centred on the youth service, a service that has been highly politicised since the 1980s. With that background, using - or even appropriating - the name of a successful, well known and well respect youth organisation (Aspire) run out of Toynbee Hall is not providing the party with a distinct name.</p> <p>I am providing the url to Aspire here for your convenience.  <a href="http://www.toynbeehall.org.uk/aspire">http://www.toynbeehall.org.uk/aspire</a></p>



	<p>Dear Sirs Please do not allow this to become a registered political party . This is a front for Lutfur Rahman to get into power . He was removed from power in 2015 and is not allowed to hold public office for 5 years . [REDACTED] saw the effect then of his administration , corruption and fraud . The great borough of Tower Hamlets deserve better than him and his team. Two of the three officers named in the Aspire application (Kalam Mahmud Abu Taher Choudhury and Jahed Bokth Choudhury) are the same close political allies of Lutfur Rahman as in the Tower Hamlets Together application, the third officer named in the Aspire application, Lillian Collins, is another close associate of Rahman. I firmly believe that the Aspire party IS the same organisation as Tower Hamlets Together which in turn is the same organisation as Tower Hamlets First. Aspire is nothing more than another poorly attempt by Lutfur Rahman and his followers to reinvigorate their corrupt methods ahead of the local and mayoral elections in May 2018 Yours faithfully [REDACTED]</p>
	<p>I wish to object on the same basis as [REDACTED] of lovewapping.org</p>
	<p>[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I observed at close quarters the disregard he and his followers had of any democratic process or values. This latest attempt to register a party his another attempt to get on the ballot paper by proxy.</p>
	<p>[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Even though he was stripped of office in 2015 at a case [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and told he could not hold office for 5 yrs. This is just him in another guise. Please for the sake of the once great borough that he ruined by corruption and fraud don't grant them political party status</p>
	<p>[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] On January 2017 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] <a href="http://lovewapping.org/2017/01/lutfur-rahman-makes-comeback-with-new-">http://lovewapping.org/2017/01/lutfur-rahman-makes-comeback-with-new-</a></p>

political-party-tower-hamlets-together/) about the attempt by Lutfur Rahman to register Tower Hamlets Together as a political party. Almost exactly one year later [REDACTED] (http://lovewapping.org/2018/01/aspire-lutfur-rahman-latest-attempt-to-launch-new-political-party/) about the attempt by Lutfur Rahman to register Aspire as a political party. I have no doubt whatsoever that the Aspire registration submission is: 1. Another attempt by Lutfur Rahman to further influence local politics in Tower Hamlets 2. A front for Lutfur Rahman's Tower Hamlets First group which was subject of numerous references by Justice Mawrey in his election petition judgement against Rahman 3. Two of the three officers named in the Aspire application (Kalam Mahmud Abu Taher Choudhury and Jahed Bokth Choudhury ) are the same close political allies of Lutfur Rahman as in the Tower Hamlets Together application, the third officer named in the Aspire application, Lillian Collins, is another close associate of Rahman. 4. The fact that the core elements of the Aspire, Tower Hamlets Together and Tower Hamlets First logos are identical is of fundamental importance to the true identity of Aspire as the iconic representations some political parties is much more important than the party name itself. It would be easy to consider the reuse of the same house logo as a stupid mistake but in truth those submitting it have no choice. It cannot be changed. 5. From all my information, experience and knowledge of how Lutfur Rahman's followers operate I firmly believe that the Aspire party IS the same organisation as Tower Hamlets Together which in turn is the same organisation as Tower Hamlets First. 6. I would ask that this application be rejected on the grounds that it is nothing more than another poorly executed attempt by Lutfur Rahman and his followers to reinvigorate their corrupt methods ahead of the local and mayoral elections in May 2018 7. Can I also ask that in future more comprehensive details of registrations are made available to the public by yourselves which should include, as a minimum, the full names and addresses of any proposed officers in addition to party logos. Regards [REDACTED]

This is yet another attempt for the disgraced former Mayor of Tower Hamlets Lutfur Rahman to use his influence over local residents to return to power. It is not acceptable and should not be registered. He is a crook and the legal system are just beginning to recognise the harm he has done to the majority of residents in LBTH.

	I am very concerned by this application which appears to be another attempt by disgraced (and banned) former mayor Lutfur Rahman to remain in local politics. please ensure this doesn't happen. This man is toxic, divisive and most of all, corrupt!
	I understand Aspire is led by Lutfur Rahman, a man who was found guilty of electoral malfeasance and corruption by an election court in 2015 and banned from standing for elected office for five years, as well as recently being barred from practicing as a solicitor by his professional organisation. How he thinks he can continue to have anything to do with politics is beyond me and I trust his history will be taken into account when processing this latest application
	Yes, This is the same organisation .and same person came again. Please don't give the restoration. Stop them.
	Please note they are the party belongs Lutfur Rahman. They are just using different people and different name just to register. I strongly recommend that they should not get registered
	This application should be refused as another incarnation of the banned Lutfur Rahman and his associates. The logo is identical to previous refused applications and in Tower Hamlets is associated with Lutfur Rahman
	1. Emblem: Clear emblem, the house replicates their political ambition. Easily visible in Black and White on the ballot paper. 2. Party name: Name is very clear and concise. It highlights their political ambition to 'aspire for office'. The name does not communicate any hate, racism or religious tension. For that reason, the name seems suitable for political use. 3. Description: Clear and easy to understand. Highlights the party's political ambitions and is not misleading in any way.
	I am really glad to see the objectives of the Aspire. We need a political party to take people out of poverty, worklessness and homelessness giving a true aspiration to the deprived community of Tower Hamlets. Tower Hamlets has progressed but the pocket deprivation are

	worse then the third world countries. The current political party made it even worse from the last position. Crime rates gone up, drug dealing spread like viruses affected most of the deprived wards in the borough. Instead of increasing police petrol the current party has reduced the police force in the borough, seems they have no clue and not living with the true aspirations of the residents.
	I am in favour of this grassroots party
	Aspire for all is something all political party need to aspire. Happy to support this application
	Too have a truly democratic process more Political groups must be represented and allowed to participate
	I support this application We need grassroots local voice
	Great grassroots movement in Tower Hamlets. Working hard for local people .
	In my view, the name, description and emblem fully meet the criteria set out and I support it because we need a local voice. I fully support their description and details and welcome independent representation. We need more independent voices. Th e details look good to me. I fully support this application as I m fed up with the two-party or one party states like situation at local level in many authorities. I support this application and party for the many.
	We need more independent groups in tower Hamlets. We need change
	I think ASPIRE is right organization for Tower Hamlet's, present administration not doing anything good for the community such as they cute all youth centres, stop free elderly care, university versery, EMA. We need change
	Aspire is a unique and professional name for a grassroots political party. Their ambitions are clearly mentioned in the description. It is very clear and well written and directly

	highlights what they aim to do. The emblem is very clear and easily visible on a ballot paper and does not convey any misleading interpretation. Aspire clearly qualify in all aspects which are being reviewed to be a political party.
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## Appendix F – Screenshots of search results on Google and Twitter





aspire toynbee hall - Twitter Search - Internet Explorer

https://twitter.com/search?f=tweets&vertical=default&q=aspire%2C Twitter, Inc. [US] Organisations My Active Organi... google.co.uk Aspire Trips · Get Help · Toynbe... aspire toynbee hall - Twitter ...

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Suggested Sites Web Slice Gallery

Find: aspire Previous Next Options

Home Moments

aspire toynbee hall Have an account? Log in

## aspire toynbee hall

Top Latest People Photos Videos News Broadcasts

**Search filters** · Show

**New to Twitter?**  
Sign up now to get your own personalised timeline!

**Sign up**

**Worldwide trends**

- #TellMe3rdWin 23.2K Tweets
- #HrantDink 11K Tweets
- #HTGAWM 76.6K Tweets
- Hayırlı Cumalar 46.3K Tweets
- 20 AAP MLAs 7,071 Tweets
- #ReleaseTheMemo 830K Tweets
- 小室哲哉 155K Tweets
- Edgar Allan Poe 4,284 Tweets
- سلام علي 12.2K Tweets

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**GraduateJobFeed** @GraduateJobFeed · 20 Aug 2013  
TOYNBEE HALL: Youth work volunteer – **Aspire** Project [dlvr.it/3qjcf4](#)  
#graduatejobs #jobs

**Volunteer Jobs** @cjvolunteers · 20 Aug 2013  
Youth work volunteer – **Aspire** project – **Toynbee Hall** (, Tower Hamlets, London) [bit.ly/165hQ40](#)

**Charity Trustee Jobs** @CJTrustees · 20 Aug 2013  
Youth work volunteer – **Aspire** project – **Toynbee Hall** (, Tower Hamlets, London) [bit.ly/1cW11Dy](#)

**Guardian CharityJobs** @GJ\_Charity · 24 Jul 2013  
**Aspire** Project Worker - London, Tower Hamlets - **TOYNBEE HALL**  
[mjobx.com/o2fjAw](#)

**Toynbee Hall** @ToynbeeHall · 1 Jul 2013  
You're invited to come to the **#Aspire** Graduation Ceremony this thursday at **Toynbee Hall** 3-5pm [bit.ly/119UC0q](#)

**GraduateJobFeed** @GraduateJobFeed · 7 Jun 2013  
TOYNBEE HALL: Youth work volunteer – **Aspire** Project [dlvr.it/3Tj0bt](#)  
#graduatejobs #jobs

**Internship\_LDN** @Internship\_LDN · 31 May 2013  
RT @AidJobs Youth Worker **Aspire** Project – **Toynbee Hall** (Unpaid Internship, Tower Hamlets, London) [dlvr.it/3RyyJy](#) #vacancy #jobs

# Application summary

PR 17/23 – 18 September 2017

The following table summarises the applications received by the Commission and the registration team's recommendations

Party name and proposed party identity marks (link to assessment note)	Registration team assessment

**Table 2: Director of Political Finance & Regulation and Legal Counsel delegated, changes only requiring approval and applications requiring a decisions on documents only.**

<a href="#">Aspire</a>  <b>Proposed financial scheme (consideration of whether or not to approve draft financial scheme only)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New party</li> <li>• England only application complete 15.09.17</li> <li>• Recommendation to approve draft financial scheme</li> </ul> <b>Final Decision</b> BP 11.10.2017: Approve the financial scheme.
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# Aspire

## Application to register a new political party – decision on draft financial scheme only

### Political objectives/party information

- The purposes of this assessment is to consider whether not the Commission should approve the draft financial scheme lodged on behalf of the party by their legal representatives on 15 September 2017. Because we are only considering whether or not to approve the financial scheme, the details of the party's application have not been published online for comment at this time.
- The party lodged an [application](#) on 30 June 2017 (please note that the date stamp on the application is incorrect) to register a political party on the Great Britain register in the name of 'Aspire'.
- The party intend to stand candidates in England only.
- This assessment is in relation to whether or not the draft financial scheme can be approved by the Commission. The application as a whole, including adoption of the financial scheme, will be considered separately. See this [email](#) of 5 October 2017 to the applicant's representative. The application is following this process in response to [representations](#) from the applicant's representative of 15 September 2017.
- The party had previously applied to register under the name 'Tower Hamlets Together'. That application was rejected. Please find links to the [application summary](#) and [registration note](#) for that application.
- That application attracted some attention from the media. A sample of the press articles are as follows:
  - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-38855417>
  - <http://lovewapping.org/2017/02/bbc-london-news-lutfur-rahman-is-back-video/> (including video of BBC report)
  - <http://lovewapping.org/2017/01/lutfur-rahman-makes-comeback-with-new-political-party-tower-hamlets-together/>
  - <http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/disgraced-lutfur-rahman-attempts-political-comeback-a3451561.html>

- <http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/763681/Lutfur-Rahman-forces-BBC-out-of-Tower-Hamlets-meeting>
- <http://www.eastlondonlines.co.uk/2017/02/tea-with-deposed-former-mayor-lutfur-rahman/>
- <http://lovewapping.org/2017/05/tower-hamlets-together-non-party-refuses-die/>
- There has been a clear implication that Lutfur Rahman, the leader of the formerly registered party 'Tower Hamlets First' has a significant role in the applicant party.
- Richard Mawrey QC as Election Commissioner in his judgement of the Election Petition to have Mr Rahman's election as Mayor of Tower Hamlets set aside, made serious and critical comments about Tower Hamlets First's financial scheme and the conduct of the financial affairs of that party. That judgement can be read using this [link](#).
- None of the persons named in the application appear to be mentioned in Richard Mawrey QC's judgement in relation to the 2014 Election Petition.
- The article below includes some information about some of the persons named in the application:
  - <http://lovewapping.org/2017/02/first-details-tower-hamlets-together-officers-emerge/>
- Prior to lodging the application the subject of this assessment the party had, after their application to register 'Tower Hamlets' together had been rejected, lodged an application to be called 'Democratic Coalition'. That application was withdrawn and the current application lodged in its place.
- I have not been able to find any website or social media accounts for the party.

## Correspondence history in relation to this application

- The Commission met with representatives of the party on 27 June 2017. A note of the meeting can be found here ([internal version](#) and [external version provided to party](#)). The documents provided by the party at that meeting can be viewed [here](#).
- The party then lodged an [application](#) on 30 June 2017 (please note that the date stamp on the application is incorrect), along with a [constitution](#) and [financial scheme](#).

- On [1 August 2017](#), the Registration Team wrote to the party setting out comments it proposed to include in the assessment and asking for comment.
- On [17 August 2017](#), we received correspondence from the party's representative Bindmans LLP asking for clarity on a number of points.
- We responded on [25 August 2017](#) providing further information in relation to the points raised. This email summarises why the Commission had expressed concern that the party had not adopted its financial scheme.
- The party's representatives wrote to the Commission on 15 September 2017 making representations in relation to the process and including the following documents:
  - [Covering letter](#)
  - [Financial scheme](#)
  - [Constitution](#)
  - [Expenditure procedures](#)
  - [Memo from Treasurer on controls and procedures](#)
  - [Donations form](#)
  - [Procedures re: submission to Commission](#)
  - [Procedures for dealing with donations](#)
- Legal advice in relation to the representations from Bindmans LLP can be viewed [here](#).
- We wrote back to the party on [5 October 2017](#), responding to their representations and setting out the next steps in relation to this application.

## Financial scheme

- The purpose of this assessment is to recommend whether or not the Commission should approve the draft [financial scheme](#) provided by the party's legal representatives on 15 September 2017. To that end, I have considered the



financial scheme itself and the [constitution](#) provided on 15 September 2017 to see if it is consistent with the financial scheme. I have not considered whether or not the financial scheme has been adopted and I have not considered any other aspect of the application to be registered, including whether or not the applied for identity marks meet the statutory tests and whether or not the constitution sets out the structure and organisation of the party.

- I have not considered the internal procedures and control documents provided by the party in relation to the financial scheme at this time. That is because I consider that those documents are relevant to consideration of whether or not the party has adopted the financial scheme, rather than whether or not the Commission should approve the scheme itself. For information, the process and procedure documents have been considered by a member of the Commission's finance team (see this [email](#)).
- Pursuant to Schedule 4, paragraph 5 of PPERA an application to register must be accompanied by '*a draft of the scheme which the party proposes to adopt for the purposes of section 26 if approved by the Commission under that section.*' Paragraph 7 sets out that an application to be registered must be signed by the proposed registered leader or registered nominating officer, the proposed treasurer and, if applicable, the campaigns officer.
- The signed [application](#) was submitted on 30 June 2017. Since that time, the party's representatives have provided an updated financial scheme. In correspondence of [15 September 2017](#), Bindmans LLP, indicated that they are '*...formally instructed by Jahed Choudhury, proposed Treasurer of the political party ASPIRE, who we are instructed is acting with the support of Kalam Choudhury and Lillian Collins, proposed Leader/Chair and Secretary of the political party ASPIRE, in respect of which an application for registration is currently being considered by the Electoral Commission.*' On that basis, I think the Commission can take the submission of the financial scheme on 15 September 2017 as duly authorised under PPERA.
- The party's financial scheme loosely follows the Commission's [model scheme](#) available on the website.
- The party have indicated in the scheme that they will not operate in respect of Northern Ireland. The scheme also indicates that the party does not intend to contest a UK parliamentary election, European election, Scottish parliament election, national assembly of Wales election or participate in a referendum to which part VII of PPERA applies.
- The scheme says that the party will not take any loans. However, the scheme does not specifically reference other types of regulated transactions, i.e. there is not mention of whether or not there will be credit facilities or connected transactions. This may be because the Commission's model scheme appears to primarily refer to regulated

transactions as 'loans', i.e. one of the headings is 'For loans (regulated transactions)'. This may be a technical point, but I welcome a view from the decision-maker.

**Comment [BP1]:** Noted. reasonable for us to assume point they mean to include of regulated transactions. I if I approve their financial s request them to clarify this when they want us to consi they have adopted the sche

**Comment [BP2]:** Noted. approve the financial sche let them know no need to o

- I have not identified any inconsistencies between what is set out in the financial scheme and the PPERA requirements (other than the point about regulated transactions mentioned above).
- The scheme, at paragraph 8.2, refers to recording information for donations of more than £500 (including on an aggregate basis). This could suggest that the party are intending to record and report donations from a source of less than £500 that total over £500, which would amount to over-reporting. A registered party is only required to record single donations of over £500 and to report donations or aggregates that total over £7,500.
- The constitution outlines the responsibility of the treasurer in paragraph 7.2(e) and section 10. I did not identify anything in those sections that conflicts with the financial scheme.
- The financial year referred to in the financial scheme is the same as that referred to in the constitution.
- The scheme appears to me to set out how the party will regulate its financial affairs for the purposes of PPERA.
- The scheme sets out that the party does not wish to register any separate accounting units and thus indicates that the party is a single organisation with no division of responsibility for the financial affairs and transactions of the party in relation to its PPERA accounting requirements.

## Recommendation

I recommend that the Commission approve the draft scheme submitted on 15 September 2017 pursuant to s 26(5) of PPERA.

6 October 2017