

FREEDOM APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE
Thursday, 7 July 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Freedom Applications Committee held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 7 July 2016 at 2.45 pm

Present

Members:

Alderman Sir David Wootton (Chairman)
Mark Boleat (Ex-Officio Member)
Hugh Morris (Ex-Officio Member)
Simon Duckworth
Alderman Peter Hewitt
Michael Welbank (Chief Commoner) – In the Chair
Alderman Sir David Wootton

Officers:

Peter Kane	-	The Chamberlain
Paul Double	-	City Remembrancer
Deborah Cluett	-	Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Murray Craig	-	

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. MEMBERS DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Alderman Sir David Wootton declared an interest in item no. 12 as Master of the Guild of Freemen.

3. ORDER OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL

The Order of the Court of Common Council of 21st April 2016 appointing the Committee and approving its terms of reference was noted.

4. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The Committee proceeded to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29. A list of Members eligible to stand was read and Alderman Sir David Wootton being the only Member expressing willingness to serve was duly elected Chairman for the ensuing year and took the Chair.

5. MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2016 were approved.

6. FREEDOM APPLICATIONS - REVIEW VETTING PROCEDURE

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain reviewing the vetting procedure applicable to candidates for the Freedom.

Members acknowledged the Committee's role in the vetting process and the enhanced checks carried out by the Chamberlain's Court. Support was expressed for vetting to continue as it helped to mitigate some of the risks associated with the Freedom.

The Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee drew attention to comments made by a Member at a recent meeting of the Ceremonials Working Party where it was suggested that he had been delaying and blocking Freedom applications. It was a rumour which had spread amongst Members and which was not true. He neither had the power nor the wish to block applications. He noted that a number of candidates had been suggested for a Freedom by Special Nomination (FSN) but that they did not meet the agreed criteria for the receipt of that category of Freedom. However, this did not preclude the people concerned proceeding along the normal Freedom route. The Chairman of the Committee supported the explanation and advised that it was important to ensure that the correct message was conveyed to Members. It was also agreed that the guidance for Members on the Freedom should be recirculated to the Committee for information.

A Member questioned how the cost of hospitality for an FSN and Freedom by Redemption, where appropriate, were met. The Committee was advised that the provision of hospitality for an FSN was met from an appropriate City Corporation budget, such as the Remembrancer's or the Chamberlain's Court depending on the nature of the candidate nominated. If it was felt desirable to provide hospitality for a Freedom by Redemption then Chairmen would need to consider whether it was something that could be provided from their budget.

RESOLVED – That the content of the report be noted and that:-

1. the vetting procedure undertaken by the Committee and the enhanced investigations currently carried out by the Chamberlain's Court continue; and
2. the Guidance for Members on the Freedom be recirculated to the Committee for information.

7. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

9. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

MOTION - That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item Nos.	Paragraph(s) in Schedule 12A
10 - 13	1 and 3

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

10. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
The non-public minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2016 were approved.
11. **RECEIPT OF TWO FREEDOMS**
The Committee considered and agreed a report of the Chamberlain whether it was possible for an individual to receive the Freedom twice.
12. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.
13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There were no urgent items.

Part 3 – Non-Public Confidential Agenda

14. **MULTIPLE NOMINATORS FOR FREEDOM**
The Committee considered and agreed action on a report of the Chamberlain which analysed a list of individuals who made multiple nominations for admission to the Freedom.
15. **FREEDOM BY SPECIAL NOMINATION - LIST OF POTENTIAL RECIPIENTS**
The Committee considered and agreed a report of the Chamberlain submitting an updated list of potential recipients of a Freedom by Special Nomination.

The meeting ended at 3.55pm

Chairman

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