

<b>Committee:</b> Policy & Resources Committee	<b>Date:</b> 14 March 2019
<b>Subject:</b> Aspirations for Member Representation by 2021 and 2025 and voluntary Members' Diversity Charter	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Emma Cunnington, Town Clerk's Department	

### Summary

At its meeting in December 2018, the Policy and Resources Committee considered and supported the direction of travel of 19 recommendations presented to it by the Members Diversity Working Party (MDWP) to assist with the City of London Corporation's ambition to enhance the diversity of the Court of Common Council. This was subject to more details coming back on the individual items.

A paper was submitted to the last meeting of the Committee addressing two of the 19 recommendations in more detail - the introduction of targets for candidacy in the elections taking place in 2021 and 2025 and, to encourage Members to consider how they could be more inclusive and demonstrate, publicly, their commitment to diversity, the introduction of a voluntary Members' Diversity Charter.

The Committee supported the aspirations of the two recommendations but asked for the paper to be revised to:-

- Give further thought to the expression of targets;
- give further thought to the aspirations for age in order to avoid discriminating against older people; and
- reiterate that focus should be on increasing the diversity of the pool of candidates standing for election, rather than "telling" the electorate who to vote for.

Additionally, whilst on balance Members were content with adopting a voluntary Members' Diversity Charter, the Committee requested that the Town Clerk finesse the wording of the text of the Charter to reflect the tenor of discussion.

## Recommendations

Members are asked to consider the following:-

- the adoption of the aspirations for enhancing the diversity of candidates standing for the 2021 election as set out in this report (i.e. 30% female and 15% BAME);
- the adoption of aspirational figures to ensure candidates standing for the 2025 elections better reflect the demographics of City workers/residents;
- the introduction of a voluntary Diversity Charter for Members to consider signing up to, to publicly show commitment and help drive the debate internally on diversity and inclusion and approve the draft text of the Charter as set out in this report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. The Policy & Resources Committee considered a report in its meeting in December 2018, setting out the recommendations on diversity proposed by the Members Diversity Working Party (MDWP).
2. The MDWP was created to *“consider and make recommendations to help promote the merits of standing for office as a Common Councilman or an Alderman to enhance the diversity of the Court of Common Council to represent better its constituency.”*
3. Following discussion at the Policy & Resources Committee meeting in December 2018, Members concluded that each of the individual recommendations would be subject to further reports or decision-making by the Committee in due course. On this basis, Members endorsed the suite of proposals presented and supported the general direction of travel.
4. Subsequently, a paper was submitted to the Policy & Resources Committee in February 2019 for further consideration to be given to two of the 19 recommendations i.e. in relation to the introduction of targets for candidacy in the elections taking place in 2021 and 2025 and the introduction of a voluntary Members’ Diversity Charter. During discussion of the issues a number of revisions were proposed, and this paper seeks to address these.
5. At the last meeting, a number of Members were cautious about the use of the word “targets” and were of the view that it might be more appropriate to refer to them as “aspirations” or “ambitions”. Additionally, in order to avoid discriminating against older people, it was felt that more detailed thought needed to be given to the ambitions for age. Members also reiterated that any aspirations in respect of the makeup of the Court should be in relation to candidacy. This was on the basis that it was for the electorate to determine who they wished to elect and therefore focus should be on working to ensure that the electorate had a wide and diverse pool of candidates from which to choose.

6. In the discussions that took place at the MDWP amongst Members and external experts, it was made clear that targets for elected representatives are the single most important signature action that underpin all other work. Taking into account the steer from Policy & Resources Committee, the MDWP would recommend that targets (or aspirations) should be applied to elected representatives as well as candidates. This approach means the focus is on achieving 'outputs' (i.e. increased diversity of Members) rather than 'inputs' (i.e. candidates), whilst at the same time recognising the steer from Policy & Resources Committee to avoid being seen to 'mandate' the electorate. The objective is to see diversity play a part all the way through the process: by widening participation and increasing the diversity of the pool of candidates and to measure the end result concerning the diversity of the Court of Common Council.
7. This report also deals with MDWP's proposal for encouraging Members to consider how they could be more inclusive and to demonstrate, publicly, their commitment to diversity, by way of the introduction of a voluntary Diversity Charter. Following the tenor of discussion at February's meeting, the draft text of the Charter has been amended to reflect the comments made.

### **Current Position**

8. The MDWP felt that the City Corporation should be as ambitious as other organisations in its aspirations for diversity. Initially, it should focus on just two of the protected characteristics: Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and, given concerns about the lack of gender (sex) diversity on a number of committees, gender. The MDWP noted that in 2017, 33% of Councillors in England and 32% of MPs were women, and that 30% was the target for female representation in decision-making positions across the Commonwealth. It is also the target for the [30% Club](#), a campaign which aims to increase gender balance on UK boards.
9. Currently, approximately 21.6% of the Court of Common Council (including Aldermen) are women. In the 2017 demographic survey of Members, of the 75 people who responded, 10% indicated that they had a disability, 90% were white, 4% Indian-Asian and 2% mixed Asian-White.
10. As part of their discussions, the MDWP reviewed data from the 2011 Office of National Statistics Census as well as the 2011 Workforce Census to help establish which diversity targets the City Corporation should be setting for the 2021 and 2025 elections.
11. For gender, statistics show that 39% of City workforce are female and 44% of the City's residential community are female.
12. For race, 22% of City workforce are BAME and 21% of the City's residential community are BAME.
13. It should be noted that various institutions in the City have adopted diversity targets to increase representation in senior roles. For example, in 2014, Lloyds Banking Group implemented targets for female representation in senior roles, to increase

the proportion of senior management roles held by women to 40% by 2020.<sup>1</sup> In addition, in February 2018, it announced that it aimed to increase BAME representation to 10% (and to 8% at senior management levels) by 2020<sup>2</sup>.

14. Desk research on political organisations' views on introducing targets have found the following results:

- a. The Commons Women and Equalities Committee ran an inquiry into 'Women in the House of Commons after 2020' in 2016. One of the recommendations states: *"Government set a domestic target of 45% representation of women in Parliament and local government by 2030 in response to the United Nations indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 5.5. The Government should also set out how it plans to achieve this target, working with political parties."* In September 2017, the Government rejected this recommendation because of the "additional regulatory burden" on parties.<sup>3</sup>
- b. The Conservative Party have more recently been more positive about women in Parliament. For example, last year the Party Chairman, Brandon Lewis, said that the party wished to commit to 50% of women on the candidates list.<sup>4</sup>
- c. It is reported that the Labour Party in July 2018 set out plans to bring in changes to give minority ethnic councillors and women reserved seats in local elections.<sup>5</sup>
- d. The Fawcett Society and LGiU undertook an analysis of council elections in May 2018 and discovered that 97% of councils are male dominated and that there has been virtually no progress on women's representation in local government. One of the report's recommendation includes: *"Parties must set out targets for increasing women's representation, and a clear action plan to achieve them – and commit to legislating for quotas if progress is not made."*<sup>6</sup>

## 2021 Elections

15. The next Court elections will take place in March 2021 and the MDWP felt that it would be achievable to set representation aspirations for gender and ethnicity in time for these elections. The proposed figures would aim for 30% of the Court to be female and 15% of the Court to be from BAME backgrounds. This would be reflected as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lloydsbankinggroup.com/our-group/responsible-business/inclusion-and-diversity/gender/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.lloydsbankinggroup.com/our-group/responsible-business/inclusion-and-diversity/ethnicity/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/women-and-equalities/Government-response/Cm-9492.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.conservatives.com/sharethefacts/2018/08/the-voice-of-women-in-politics>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/jul/16/labour-aims-to-boost-number-of-bame-and-women-councillors>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/news/womens-representation-in-local-government-stuck-in-the-past>

Table 1: Female representation ambitions for 2021

	Current (based on 2017 data)		Ambition for 2021 elections		Difference	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Female</i>	29	23	38	30	+9	+7

Table 2: BAME representation ambitions for 2021

	Current (based on 2017 data)		Ambition for 2021 elections		Difference	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>BAME</i>	13	10	19	15	+6	+5

16. To avoid the creation of unintended discrimination towards older people, the Committee was cautious about setting a specific aspiration in terms of age. Notwithstanding this, the Committee could consider supporting the principle of younger people being encouraged to stand for election without setting a specific aspirational figure.

17. If Members were minded to agree the above-mentioned ambitions, further reports would be brought to the Policy & Resources Committee in due course setting out diversity and inclusion initiatives to help achieve these figures.

## 2025 Elections

18. The MDWP also proposed figures to define ambitions for the 2025 Common Councilmen elections as well as Aldermanic elections to be reflective of the demographics of City workers and residents. These ambitions would reflect the City community's race and sex and are outlined in tables 3 and 4 below.

19. It is also proposed that ambitions for other protected characteristics, such as disability, sexuality and religion, are considered after the 2021 elections and used in the 2025 elections.

Table 3: Gender representation ambitions for 2025

	Current (based on 2017 data)		Ambition for 2025 elections		Difference	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Female</i>	29	23	52	42	+23	+19

Table 4: BAME representation ambitions for 2025

	Current (based on 2017 data)		Ambition for 2025 elections		Difference	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>BAME</i>	21	17	28	22	+7	+5

20. Again, if supported, further reports would be brought back to the Committee on the activities in this area.

### **Voluntary Members Diversity Charter**

21. In addition to the aspirations set out above, the MDWP felt that it would be useful to introduce a Diversity Charter, which Members can choose to sign up to when elected as Alderman or Common Councilman. The voluntary Members Diversity Charter would allow Members to publicly show commitment to this agenda and help drive the debate internally on diversity and inclusion.
22. In considering the proposed undertakings set out in the Charter, the Policy and Resources Committee felt that the wording would benefit from further finessing. For example, Members should be encouraged to be mindful of ethnicity and not just gender (sex) when considering appointments to committees. The text of the Charter has been revised as set out below.
23. The Policy & Resources Committee is asked to consider, firstly, whether a Diversity Charter should be adopted, and, secondly, the proposed wording of the Charter, as follows:

*“The City flourishes today by attracting international talent and innovating to succeed. I believe that attracting a wider pool of talent to engage with the City of London Corporation will build a City fit for the future.*

*To support this, I will:*

- 1) Encourage businesses, when engaging on voter registration, to select voters which reflects their diverse workforce*
- 2) Whilst being conscious of capabilities, consider the gender (sex) and ethnic mix of committees when voting on appointments to committees*
- 3) Consider how images posted on social media when on City Corporation business might be perceived;*
- 4) Consider the diversity of candidates proposed for the Freedom of the City and how they reflect the City’s communities;*
- 5) Undertake unconscious bias training;*
- 6) Seek to introduce new people, from diverse backgrounds, to the City, for example, through invitations to functions;*
- 7) Look out for talented people, from diverse backgrounds, who could make a contribution to the work of the City Corporation and encourage them to consider standing for election.”*

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

24. Adopting the recommendations and ambitions set out in this report and the Diversity Charter supports the strategic aims and outcomes of the City Corporation outlined in the Corporate Plan 2018-2023. Enhancing the diversity of elected Members will ‘contribute to a flourishing society’ by allowing ‘people to have equal

opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential’, and it will ‘support a thriving economy’ by having ‘access to the skills and talent we need’.

## **Conclusion**

25. The MDWP is of the view that the City Corporation should aim to be ambitious and demonstrate its commitment to diversity by clearly setting aspirations for protected characteristics ahead of the Court of Common Council elections in 2021 and 2025. This should be reflective of the City communities that Members represent.
26. Additionally, the introduction of a voluntary Members Diversity Charter would allow Members to publicly show further commitment to this agenda and help drive the debate internally on diversity and inclusion.

## **Appendices - None**

## **Background Papers**

- *‘Enhancing the Diversity of the Court of Common Council’* – Report of the Town Clerk on behalf of the Members Diversity Working Party (Policy & Resources Committee, 13 December 2018)
- *‘Targets for Member Representation by 2021 and 2025 and voluntary Members’ Diversity Charter’* – Report of the Town Clerk on behalf of the Members Diversity Working Party (Policy & Resources Committee, 21 February 2019)

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