



Report – Policy & Resources Committee

Bridewell Royal Hospital – Constitutional Changes

To be presented on Thursday, 21st May 2015

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons
of the City of London in Common Council assembled.*

SUMMARY

The City of London Corporation has long established links with Bridewell Royal Hospital (incorporating King Edward's School Witley) with some trustees drawn from the Court of Common Council and the Court of Aldermen. Since 2013, following a number of changes to Bridewell Royal Hospital's Constitution in order to modernise and improve its administration, The Lord Mayor has also been the Bridewell Charter Patron.

The Bridewell Royal Hospital has recently submitted a revised Constitution to the Charity Commission for its consideration following the announcement of a merger between King Edward's School Witley and Barrow Hills School Witley, a preparatory school in close proximity to King Edward's School Witley. The merger, with effect from September 2015, is intended to realise efficiencies across both schools and generate long term benefits, financially and academically, for both King Edward's School Witley and Barrow Hills School Witley.

The revised Constitution to accommodate the transfer of Barrow Hills School Witley (which has been amended by resolutions of the Court of Bridewell Royal Hospital) provides for a smaller trustee body. There is currently provision for twelve members of the Court of Bridewell Royal Hospital to be drawn from the Court of Common Council but the revised Constitution incorporates a reduction from twelve to seven trustees.

In light of the proposed reduction in the number of Common Council Members appointed to serve on the Court of Bridewell Royal Hospital, this Committee, and your Education Board, have considered the changes. Whilst approval of the Court of Common Council is not required, the Committee is content to support the reductions and it is suggested that if Bridewell Royal Hospital were amenable

to making further constitutional changes in the future, the number of appointed members from the Court be further reduced given the other demands for governors from the Court.

Main Report

1. The City of London Corporation has long established links with Bridewell Royal Hospital (incorporating King Edward's School Witley) with Nominated Members drawn from the Court of Common Council and the Court of Aldermen. Since 2013, The Lord Mayor has also been the Bridewell Charter Patron.
2. Following an announcement in March 2015 of a merger between King Edward's School Witley and Barrow Hills School Witley, a preparatory school in close proximity to King Edward's School Witley, a revised Constitution was submitted by Bridewell Royal Hospital to the Charity Commission in April 2015. The Charity Commission has since updated its records on the basis of the revised Constitution.
3. The revised Constitution (the 1988 Scheme as amended by subsequent Resolutions) sets out the constitutional and governance arrangements in respect of both schools and includes a reduction – from twelve to seven - in the number of trustees drawn from the Court of Common Council.
4. The revised Constitution follows a number of constitutional changes that took place in 2012/2013, although there were no changes to the number of trustees appointed by the Court of Common Council at that time.
5. In February 2012 the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen submitted a letter of support for the proposed changes to the Bridewell Constitution which included the creation of a Bridewell Charter Patron, thus linking The Lord Mayor to the School. Thereafter in December 2012, the Court of Aldermen confirmed its on-going support for suggested constitutional changes and agreed to relinquish the right of The Lord Mayor and each of the Aldermen of the City of London Corporation to be ex-officio members of the Court of Bridewell Royal Hospital. This right was replaced with by the right to appoint five Aldermen to the Bridewell Court. Whilst no further changes to the Aldermanic appointments were included in the submission to the Charity Commission, the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen will consider the matter on 19th May 2015.
6. Since 2013, the composition of the Court of Bridewell Royal Hospital has included the following Court of Common Council and Court of Aldermen nominations:-

That the Court shall consist when complete of 30 competent persons being:

- *Five Members nominated by the Court of Aldermen*
- *Twelve Members nominated by the Court of Common Council*
- *Thirteen Co-opted Members*

and that

A Vice-President shall be elected from among the five Aldermanic Members of the Court;
A Treasurer shall be elected from among the Members of the Court.

Revised Constitution and implications for the City of London Corporation

7. In light of the proposed revisions to the Constitution, Members should be aware that the most significant changes for the City of London Corporation concern the number of trustees which are appointed by the Court of Common Council. It is proposed that the number of trustees be reduced from twelve to seven, as follows:

That the Court shall consist when complete of a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 30 competent persons being:

- *Five Members nominated by the Court of Aldermen*
- *Seven Members nominated by the Court of Common Council*
- *Between eight and eighteen Co-opted Members (to include a number of new Co-opted Governors from Barrow Hills School)*

and that

There shall be a Bridewell Charter Patron, who may be a Member of the Court, who shall be the Lord Mayor for the time being of the City of London.

A Vice-President shall be elected from among the five Aldermanic Members of the Court;

A Treasurer shall be elected from among the Members of the Court, excepting that he may also not be the Vice-President.

8. There are currently five vacancies on the Court of Bridewell Royal Hospital from the Court of Common Council. These vacancies have, despite repeated advertisement, remained unfilled for a considerable time. In light of the on-going vacancies, Members may consider a reduction in the number of appointments, from 12 to 7, as logical. Members should also be aware that it is anticipated that there will, going forward, be a greater focus on identifying appropriate skills and knowledge sets for those appointed to the Court of Bridewell Royal Hospital to ensure that the governing body is both fully and actively involved in the work of the charity.
9. Whilst approval by the Courts of Common Council and Aldermen for the constitutional changes is not required, King Edward's School Witley is keen to ensure that the significant link with the City of London Corporation is maintained in the future and that both Courts are aware, and supportive of, the changes. Whilst the Charity Commission has now endorsed the constitutional changes, letters of consent from both the Court of Common Council and the Court of Aldermen have been requested by Bridewell Royal Hospital.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. The revised Constitution will, following the recent merger, set out an appropriate governance framework for both King Edward's School Witley and Barrow Hills School Witley. It is anticipated that the proposed reduction in Common Council trustees will minimise the likelihood of on-going vacancies on the Court of Bridewell Royal Hospital, as has been the position for some time whilst ensuring that the important link between the City Corporation and Bridewell Royal Hospital (incorporating King Edward's School Witley and Barrow Hills School Witley) is maintained.

Recommendation

11. We **recommend** that the Court of Common Council note the constitutional changes (in respect of the reduction in appointed members of the Court of Common Council) that have been endorsed by the Charity Commission and to approve the submission of a letter of support to Bridewell Royal Hospital on behalf of the Court of Common Council.

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 30th day of April 2015.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee

Mark John Boleat
Chairman, Policy & Resources Committee