



Court of Common Council - Addendum

Date: FRIDAY, 25 APRIL 2025

Time: 1.00 pm

Venue: GUILDHALL

13. QUESTIONS

Question Summary

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COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL – 25th April 2025

QUESTIONS SUMMARY

1. **Alderwoman Elizabeth King to ask a question of the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee concerning the recent Common Councillor elections:-**

“Firstly, let me congratulate Alice, her team for their heroic efforts and thank all candidates. It takes courage to stand. At our hustings there were many questions about democracy and accountability.

Resolutions were passed in 2 wards concerning the impact of the energetic and well-resourced Speak for the City campaign. Whilst no one can be forced to stand or vote, it not only failed to increase the number of candidates, resulting in 14 uncontested wards but also failed to meet its own performance measures including both: “Increasing the number of candidates and contested wards”. Moreover, turnout was as low as 11% in one ward.

What are your plans to enhance our democratic legitimacy and reduce reputational risk?”

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2. **Tijs Broeke to ask a question of the Chair of the Natural Environment Board concerning the “Cheapside Tree”:-**

“At our Ward of Cheap Wardmote in March the local community asked about the protection of the old 'Cheapside tree' and plans to improve the small garden around the tree. Can the chair give an update on the plans to preserve the tree and upgrade the small garden? When will the local community see this improved?”

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3. **Deputy Andrien Meyers to ask a question of the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee concerning the English Devolution Bill:-**

“The Government plans to abolish dozens of councils by establishing unitary authorities. This should save the Treasury some £3bn.

Overall allocations to local government in England, most of which is provided by the Treasury, has been cut by 19% in real terms since 2010.

Major councils, including Birmingham and Nottingham, have been forced into special measures after going bust. The central government has no plans to look again at the main "local" taxes, business rates and council tax.

The Devolution bill is a reorganisation of local government and councils.

It is estimated that about 60% of England will be covered by the new arrangements, with an aspiration of some 85% by the next election.

There are already 12 areas with a "devolution deal" including London, what is the actual impact on the Corporation?”

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4. Jason Pritchard to ask a question of the Chairman of the Community and Children's concerning the City Child and Family Centre at the Aldgate School:-

"In the recent elections, Portsoken recorded a turnout of 49.3%. A remarkable figure, some ten points ahead of most wards in the City and a level almost unheard of in local elections across the country.

The people of Portsoken have once again demonstrated their faith in the City and its institutions. Chairman, do you agree that the City should now reciprocate that faith by addressing their primary concern — by retaining the Children's and Family Centre at the Aldgate School for the foreseeable future?

The proposed removal of this vital service from the east of the City has caused real distress, not only in Portsoken, but across all the eastern wards. Surely it is time to reassure these communities by safeguarding this much-valued provision.

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5. Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney to ask a question of the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee concerning defence preparations:-

"May I add my congratulations to all elected Members as they commence their terms. At moments like this it is natural to look to the future and ponder what the next four years might bring. As we do this I observe that a few months ago the Chief of the General Staff General Sir Roly Walker said in his first speech that the Army has three years to prepare to fight or deter war, given that threats from Russia, a possible Chinese invasion of Taiwan and Iranian nuclear capabilities could converge in 2027. This echoed his predecessor, Sir Patrick Sanders, who described the current generation as a "pre-war generation" and of the need to train a citizen army. Mindful of this, and the City's historically supportive and proud associations and affiliations with the armed forces how is the City planning to play its part in this preparation?"

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