

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF ALDERMEN
Tuesday, 7 December 2021

Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held in Committee Rooms 3 & 4, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall and on Microsoft Teams on Tuesday, 7 December 2021 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Alderman Sir David Wootton (Chairman)
The Rt Hon. The Lord Mayor Vincent Thomas Keaveny
Alderman Ian Luder
Alderman Sir Alan Yarrow
Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley
Alderman Sir Charles Bowman
Alderman Sir Peter Estlin
Alderman & Sheriff Nicholas Lyons
Alderman & Sheriff Alison Gowman
Alderman David Graves
Alderman Timothy Hailes
Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli
Alderman Baroness Scotland
Alderman Robert Howard
Alderman Alastair King
Alderman Gregory Jones QC
Alderman Prem Goyal
Alderman Professor Emma Edhem
Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney
Alderman Bronek Masojada

Officers:

John Barradell	- Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Lorraine Brook	- Town Clerk's Department
Rhiannon Leary	- Town Clerk's Department
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- The Chamberlain
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor
Paul Double	- City Remembrancer
Paul Wright	- Deputy Remembrancer
Caroline Jack	- Executive Director, Private Secretary to the Lord Mayor
Tim Wainwright	- Mansion House
Jason Esi	- Communications
Aqib Hussain	- Chief Operating Officer's Department

[Maggie Berry, Director of Heart of the City was also present at the meeting for item 4.]

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Aldermen Nicholas Anstee, John Garbutt, Susan Langley and William Russell.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 19th October 2021.

The Chairman then took the opportunity to congratulate Alderman Gregory Jones on becoming a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at St Stephen's House, University of Oxford.

Matters Arising

Electoral Registration and deadline for entry onto the ward Lists All Aldermen were encouraged to profile the registration period and encourage business voters and residents to submit their registration requests in good time ahead of close of play on 16th December 2021. In response to a question regarding registration levels to date, the Town Clerk confirmed that the data suggested that we were ahead of where we were last year. With regards to non-responder lists which had been provided to each Member, concerns were expressed regarding the data which was significantly out of date and it this ultimately hampered all efforts to enhance registration, particularly amongst City businesses.

A query was raised regarding registration by a business even though the premises was currently vacated due to refurbishment. The Comptroller and City Solicitor advised that if people could demonstrate that their principle place of work (irrelevant of work from home) was in the City, registration was permitted.

Draft Bill for an Act of Common Council

It was noted that the draft Bill, which had been circulated by the Town Clerk ahead of the meeting, would be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee on 16th December 2021 and thereafter submitted to the Court of Common Council in January for it's first and second readings. As Members were aware, the Bill would address both the issue of eligibility to be an Alderman and also enhance the number of Aldermen who could preside over Aldermanic elections in place of the Lord Mayor, as appointed Aldermanic Representatives. Some concern was raised about the proposed Bill and whether this would result in opening up eligibility to such a degree that any person could stand for election. The Comptroller and City Solicitor commented that the proposals were intended to formalise the Law Officers' opinions on these issues, but that further political and policy debate could take place.

In response to a query about potential ambiguity in the Bill around qualification, Mr Remembrancer commented that the Bill confirmed the Law Officers' opinion

on this matter. Following some discussion there was some uncertainty about whether something was being changed or simply clarified in terms of the current legal position. It was suggested therefore that the following points should be addressed, and clarification provided, by the Law Officers: (i) what are the criteria to be an Alderman and (ii) does that outcome reflect the political will of the Court/City Corporation about who should be eligible?

RESOLVED: - That the minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 19th October 2021 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **PRESENTATION - HEART OF THE CITY**

Maggie Berry (Director, Heart of the City) provided an update for the Committee on the current priorities for Heart of the City.

Members were advised about Heart of the City's new climate action course for small and medium sized business (SMEs) operating in the Square Mile, free to SMEs and funded by the City of London Corporation. Members were advised that 69% of SMEs did not know how to measure their carbon footprint so there was a vital role to be played in supporting SME's to address what they are doing to mitigate climate change. This included the support of large City-based businesses to help the SME community and supply chains to achieve the net zero target. It was noted that Climate for SMEs: 4 Steps to Action was intended to get SMEs ready to start their net zero journey in four modules with workshops and insight sessions introducing them to sustainability and climate change experts to guide them so they could develop a net zero action plan and make a commitment to being net zero by 2040. Businesses with less than 250 employees that were based in or had substantial operations in the City of London were eligible to sign up to the course. Members were advised that information about the climate course was available to share online at <https://theheartofthecity.com/spread-the-word/> and applications to join the course could be made via theheartofthecity.com.

In response to a query about the number of SMEs that were signed up, Ms Berry commented that details could be circulated after the meeting. It was noted that some SMEs had signed up but fell into the category of not being located in the City but having more than 50% of their operations in the City. Having outlined the SME outreach activity that had already been undertaken, Ms Berry invited all Aldermen to help Heart of the City reach all SMEs in their Wards, particularly as this would be an on-going campaign and SMEs could sign up for the programme at any time. Currently 40 businesses were signed up to commence the programme in the new year. Heart of the City was also keen to know what climate related issues SMEs were facing and how the organisation might be able to assist.

An Alderman enquired about engagement with trade bodies such as UK Finance, the Investment Association, PIMFA and PFS and, in response, Aldermen were asked to provide introductions to relevant trade bodies. The Chairman commented that, in order to assist Heart of the City, it would be useful to know what businesses were in each Ward and which were already

registered so a targeted approach could be made, noting GDPR considerations. This flow of information and accurate data would be helpful for all parties and beyond the climate piece. It was noted that a good dialogue was in place with the Electoral Registration Team around data sharing.

With regards to future regulatory requirements, a query was raised about how Heart of the City was keeping abreast of on-going changes and future formal requirements, so it could be a useful conduit for SMEs. Ms Berry confirmed that Heart of the City was working closely with an engaged group of corporate ambassadors and SMEs to ensure that all businesses could be equipped ahead of time.

There was some discussion about the need to engage larger City businesses in this activity so they could champion the commitment to achieving net zero and actively promote the toolkit and, if desirable, bespoke programmes across supply chains throughout the UK. It was noted that the climate action toolkit was free to all businesses and Heart of the City was happy to work with larger business to develop bespoke programmes. Toolkit and information to be shared with all aldermen.

The Chairman thanked Ms Berry for her presentation and requested that the Town Clerk circulate the relevant presentation materials and other useful information to all Aldermen.

5. APPOINTMENT TO POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the appointment of Alderman and Sheriff Nicholas Lyons to serve on the Policy and Resources Committee.

Resolved:- That Alderman and Sheriff Nicholas Lyons to serve on the Policy and Resources Committee henceforth.

6. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN - EXTENSION TO WAIVER: LIVERY COMPANIES AND GUILDS

The Committee received a report of action taken by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen and the Chairman of the Court of Aldermen, in accordance with Standing Order No. 46 (Court of Aldermen), relative to an extension to the waiver previously issued by the Court of Aldermen to enable Livery Companies and Guilds to conduct their business on a virtual basis until 31 March 2022.

It was noted that in relation to this matter an item had been placed on the agenda at item 16. However, the Magistracy and Livery Sub-Committee would be reviewing the position at its next meeting on 16th December 2021 and thereafter the General Purposes Committee would consider future guidance to the Livery and Guilds in respect of the conduct of their business beyond 31 March 2022.

Resolved:- That –

(i) the report of action taken be noted; and

(ii) the Committee note that the longer-term position in respect of the conduct of Livery Company and Guild business beyond 31st March 2022 shall be considered at the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen on 8th February 2022.

7. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN: WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF DYERS - SUPPLEMENTAL CHARTER**

The Committee received a report of action taken by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen and the Magistracy and Livery Sub-Committee, and the Chairman of the Court of Aldermen, in accordance with Standing Order No. 46 (Court of Aldermen), relative to approval of a Supplemental Charter and a Schedule to the Supplemental Charter for the Worshipful Company of Dyers.

Resolved:- That the report of action taken be noted.

8. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

9. **MAYORAL AND SHRIEVAL EXPENSES - APPOINTMENT OF THE ALDERMANIC DEPUTATION 2022-23**

The Committee considered appointments to the Mayoral and Shrieval Expenses – Aldermanic Deputation for 2022/2023.

Resolved:- That Alderman Sir David Wootton (Chairman, General Purposes Committee of Aldermen), Alderman William Russell (Deputy Chairman, General Purposes Committee of Aldermen) and Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley (Chairman, Nominations Committee of Aldermen) be appointed to serve on the Mayoral and Shrieval Expenses – Aldermanic Deputation for 2022/2023.

10. **LIVERY CLOTH - AWARD OF ANNUAL GRANT**

The Committee considered the award of the annual Livery Cloth grant.

Resolved:- That the annual Livery Cloth grant of £1,700 be awarded to Providence Row.

11. **FUTURE MEETING MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

The Chairman sought the views of the Committee in respect of its future meeting arrangements, specifically whether Members wished to continue the current practice of holding public meetings of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen and the Court of Aldermen on a hybrid basis (with physical or virtual participation by Members). Those present expressed support for a continuation of the current arrangements, as provided for in the Court of Aldermen's Standing Orders.

Resolved:- That, following a review by the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen, public meetings of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen and the Court of Aldermen shall continue to operate on a hybrid basis with either physical or virtual participation by Members.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no other business.

13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

Resolved:- That, in accordance with the Court of Aldermen's Disclosure Arrangement (Standing Order 25), the public shall be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen have determined, having had due regard to the Disclosure Arrangement, that disclosure should not be permitted.

14. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 19th October 2021.

Resolved:- That the non-public minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 19th October 2021 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

15. **NON-PUBLIC OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LIST**

The Committee considered the Non-Public Outstanding Actions List which had been updated since the last meeting on 19th October 2021.

Resolved:- That –

1. the Non-Public Outstanding Actions List be noted; and
2. that completed items be removed from the list.

16. **REVIEW OF WAIVER: CONDUCT OF VIRTUAL BUSINESS BY LIVERY COMPANIES AND GUILDS**

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Magistracy and Livery Sub-Committee would review the issue of conduct of virtual business at its next meeting on 16th December 2021 and thereafter the General Purposes Committee would consider future guidance to the Livery and Guilds in respect of the conduct of their business beyond 31 March 2022.

NOTED.

17. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

18. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

With the Chairman's consent, one item of urgent business was considered whilst the public were excluded.

19. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: PROPOSALS FOR THE ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN OF THE OFFICE OF THE LORD MAYOR AND MANSION HOUSE**

The Committee considered and approved a confidential report of the Executive Director, Private secretary to the Lord Mayor relative to proposals for the organisational design of the Office of the Lord Mayor and Mansion House.

Resolved:- That the report be approved.

The meeting ended at 12.22 pm

Chairman

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