



General Purposes Committee of Aldermen

Date: WEDNESDAY, 30 MARCH 2022
Time: 11.00 am
Venue: HYBRID PUBLIC MEETING (ACCESSIBLE REMOTELY)

Members: Alderman Sir David Wootton (Chairman)
Alderman Sir William Russell (Deputy Chairman)
The Rt Hon. The Lord Mayor Vincent Thomas Keaveny
Alderman Ian Luder
Alderman Nick Anstee
Alderman Sir Alan Yarrow
Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley
Alderman Sir Charles Bowman
Alderman Sir Peter Estlin
Alderman & Sheriff Nicholas Lyons (SABTAC)
Alderman & Sheriff Alison Gowman
Alderman David Graves
Alderman John Garbutt
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
Alderwoman Susan Langley
Alderman Bronek Masojada

Enquiries: Gemma Stokley
gemma.stokley@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Accessing the virtual public meeting

Members of the public can observe this hybrid public meeting at the below link:

<https://youtu.be/WNB9J0sZk5Q>

A recording of the public element of the meeting will be available via the above link following the end of the public meeting and will be accessible for up to one municipal year. Please note: Online meeting recordings do not constitute the formal minutes of the meeting; minutes are written and are available on the City of London Corporation's website. Recordings may be edited, at the discretion of the proper officer, to remove any inappropriate material.

**John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

3. **MINUTES**

To approve the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 8 February 2022.

For Decision
(Pages 5 - 14)

4. **ALDERMANIC RESIGNATIONS UNDER THE 70 YEAR CONVENTION**

Joint report of the Town Clerk, the Remembrancer and the Comptroller and City Solicitor.

For Decision
(Pages 15 - 20)

5. **ALDERMANIC ELECTIONS AND MEETING DATES IN 2022**

The Chairman to be heard.

For Discussion

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

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

8. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION - 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.

For Decision

Part 2 - Non-Public

9. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To approve the non-public minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 8 February 2022.

For Decision
(Pages 21 - 24)

10. **MINUTES OF THE MAGISTRACY AND LIVERY SUB (GENERAL PURPOSES) COMMITTEE**

A) 2 MARCH 2022

To note the minutes of the previous meeting of the Magistracy and Livery Sub (General Purposes) Committee meeting held on 2 March 2022.

TO FOLLOW

B) 9 MARCH 2022

To note the minutes of the previous meeting of the Magistracy and Livery Sub (General Purposes) Committee meeting held on 9 March 2022.

TO FOLLOW

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

To note the non-public outstanding actions in respect of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen's work programme.

For Information
(Pages 25 - 26)

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

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

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF ALDERMEN Tuesday, 8 February 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held at Aldermen's Court Room, Mezzanine Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 8 February 2022 at 10.45 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 Charles Bowman
Alderman Sir Peter Estlin
Alderman & Sheriff Nicholas Lyons
Alderman & Sheriff Alison Gowman
Alderman David Graves
Alderman John Garbutt
Alderman Timothy Hailes
Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli
Alderman Robert Howard
Alderman Alastair King
Alderman Gregory Jones QC
Alderman Prem Goyal
Alderman Professor Emma Edhem
Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney
Alderwoman Susan Langley
Alderman Bronek Masojada

Officers:

Gregory Moore	- Assistant Town Clerk
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Rhiannon Leary	- Executive Officer to the Court of Aldermen
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- The Chamberlain
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor
Paul Double	- City Remembrancer
Aqib Hussain	- Technology Support Partner
Gregory Moore	- Senior Committee & Member Services Officer
Tim Wainwright	- Relationship Manager (Continuum)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Alderman Sir William Russell (Deputy Chairman), Alderman Nick Anstee, Alderman Baroness Scotland, Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **CITY & GUILDS PRESENTATION - KIRSTIE DONNELLY**

Kirstie Donnelly MBE, Group Chief Executive of City & Guilds Group addressed the meeting on the work of City & Guilds London Institute, its purpose and aims which was essentially still centred around jobs and skills and ensuring that the economy and individuals could prosper.

Aldermen were handed copies of the 'Great Jobs' publication launched just last week, and which Ms Donnelly highlighted had received much media coverage as well as coverage amongst government and stakeholders. She went on to report that the publication attempted to address the oxymoron that had emerged from the recent pandemic in that there were many jobs available but without people to fill these roles and attempted to explore why this may be the case. Ms Donnelly explained the important role that City & Guilds played not just in delivering training, apprenticeships and skills and qualifications but also in campaigning for everything around what good, lifelong learning and a skills education strategy should look like.

She went on to underline that skills were just as important today as when City & Guilds had been founded in 1878 and that they did make a material difference to the economy. It was highlighted that some of the same economic challenges faced in the second industrial revolution were similar to those being faced today. Ms Donnelly referred to the City & Guilds College which became the Mechanical and Civil Engineering Corps of Imperial College and which the City had helped create as well as the City & Guilds Art School that trained students to world-class standards in applied arts such as stone masonry and the significant work undertaken to set up one of the examination boards – AQA which were all part of the organisation's legacy and past, but which were all still very much flourishing today. These days, the Committee were informed that City & Guilds delivered many thousands of work programmes across 24 industry sectors and offering a variety of flexible, lifelong employability programmes. It was highlighted that City & Guilds had their own training centres across the country where between 1500-2000 apprentices were trained in engineering every year. Over 3 million learners were supported to develop the skills they need every year both in the UK and internationally. City & Guilds also invested in social projects and bursaries so that the impact on those from disadvantaged backgrounds could be increased. Ms Donnelly underlined that the organisation worked very closely with the City Corporation and the Livery and highlighted how this work very much aligned with the Education Strategy being rolled out by the City. It was reported that match funding was also provided to 40 Livery companies for bursaries from more modern roles in digital and social media right through to the rarer craft and heritage skills such as thatching.

Ms Donnelly stated that she hoped that the Aldermen could be proud of the contributions made by City & Guilds over the centuries and the vision that their

forebearers had had which had very much paid off judging by the millions of young people and adults in the UK and across the world who had benefitted from the City & Guilds experience. However, it was recognised that there was still much work to be done, not least in the skills challenges currently faced which were exasperated by the fast pace of change, technology, the pandemic and Brexit. The challenge here was not dissimilar to that faced in 1878 with a real need to keep training and curricular up to date in a world of accelerating technology change and to recruit and support the best class generation of trainers and equip them to train effectively. Ms Donnelly underlined that lifelong careers may now be a thing of the past but that lifelong learning remained relevant. Amongst all of this change, it was noted that the education system itself had not undergone dramatic change over many centuries. Ms Donnelly concluded by stating that it was recognised that there was much more that City & Guilds could do working with the City Corporation looking at how the UK approach to skills could be modernised and how the issue of what people learn and when (pace and place) might best be tackled. She added that City & Guilds were also keen to explore what true lifelong learning looked like for people needing to reskill throughout their lives/careers. Building on this, it would also be necessary to look at what lifelong learning looked like in a world of vocational skills for industry. Ms Donnelly went on to mention the possible creation of an innovation learning lab in the space that would be available around the Smithfield Market site going forward.

Ms Donnelly thanked the Committee for their time and invited questions.

An Alderman referred to help available for the unemployed and questioned whether City & Guilds were seeking to work with Job Centres to support those who may lack literacy, numeracy and digital skills to secure employment. Ms Donnelly reported that City & Guilds delivered over one million functional skills courses (Maths and English) every year and that this was embedded in the apprenticeships as well as offered directly to adults who needed to acquire these skills that they may not have left school with. The Committee were also informed that, during the pandemic, City & Guilds had worked alongside the City Corporation on 'skills bridges' which focused on helping those adults transitioning out of sectors that had been decimated by the pandemic to acquire new, additional and essential skills to move into a new sector. Ms Donnelly recognised that attracting young people and adults into literacy and numeracy courses required very different strategies and approaches and that this was an example of something that could be tested and embedded in the aforementioned Innovation Learning Lab.

Another Alderman underlined that all on the Committee were passionate about education skills training and commented that he had been pleased to see, under a new CEO, an openness and willingness for City & Guilds to reconnect with the City. He went on to state that, in his view, the City had two unique things that it could continue to offer to this long-standing relationship – the first being its international connectivity/outreach and the second being funds to contribute towards things such as the laboratory mentioned that would continue to promote and explore lifelong, blended, modular learning. He questioned the role that Ms Donnelly felt that the City should be playing here going forward.

An Alderwoman stated that there were now many organisations focused on skills but stressed that one of the many strengths that the City Corporation had was as a great convener. She therefore questioned whether there was something that the City could do in terms of bringing this network together to discuss and establish shared objectives.

Another Alderman referred to the launch of the apprentice levy, highlighting that £1 billion of this per year was unspent. He went on to state that whilst championing apprenticeships was important, modularising skills in a way that all employees could potentially benefit from skills programmes was hugely beneficial and that advocacy around policy change was therefore needed. Secondly, he highlighted that there was a careers festival held annually at the Guildhall that was to be attended by apprentices from all over London and the home counties this year to celebrate apprenticeships and was something that City & Guilds could also connect into. Finally, he referred to the City's Education Board which was heavily focused on education skills and reported that a past Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee had set up an innovation warehouse in the Smithfield area approximately 12 years ago as a sort of prototype. He suggested that the laboratory idea floated today could well be the 21st century version of Imperial College and something that the Education Board could help take forward as a long-term project.

Another Alderman mentioned that the City were championing 'green skills for a sustainable skyline' which was focused on upskilling people in 'green roles' particularly around the commercial building sector which was important to the City and was the kind of prototype coming through which would see businesses working alongside training organisations and others to deliver on skills and job creation.

An Alderman referred to the booklet circulated today and the underlying message within on the growing skills gap, identifying IT skills but also fishmongers, poultry dressers, agricultural workers and bakers. The booklet went on to dedicate a chapter to 'restoring pride in essential jobs' and the Alderman went on to focus on status and questioned what the City might be able to do to shift the status around certain more traditional trades as well as things such as financial services, professional and legal services.

Ms Donnelly thanked the Committee for their contributions. With regard to the point made as to skills today being more global than when City & Guilds was first founded, she recognised this and stressed that, one of the reasons why she was interested in pursuing the Innovation Lab was to examine what good, blended learning looked like in order to prepare young people and adults for skills that could work globally. This may not necessarily mean that they would physically relocate in their careers, but many would perhaps work for multinational and global companies. She underlined that skills were a global commodity and that therefore looking at how these could be portable/stackable and the role of the 'modern digital credential' that could follow an individual and allow them to evidence all of their learning could be a theme of the work undertaken in partnership with the City Corporation going forwards.

Ms Donnelly emphasised that focusing in on those essential; industries that had kept the country running for the past few years as well as some of the newer industries such as green skills would be equally important. She went on to state that looking at how a culture of lifelong learning and building an excitement around this so that learning becomes something that people want to do was the real route to genuinely levelling up. She recognised that the City had much to offer here in terms of playing a convening role and helping to bring together much of what was out there around skills and learning and helping to create the right pathways into these opportunities. As well as virtual learning, it was recognised that in-person interaction would continue to be important and Ms Donnelly therefore referred back to the idea of a physical, lifelong learning hub situated in the heart of the City. A location such as Smithfield would also provide an opportunity to showcase some of the more traditional careers mentioned.

The Lord Mayor highlighted that, for many, many years now, skills had been part of the Mayoral agenda and, if anything, this was expected to be amplified in future years following the pandemic. He underlined that going forward conversations would be had with those who had held the office of Sheriff to ask that begin to think about this particular aspect of a common element of all Mayoral themes and to look at what could be done around the delivery of skills alongside the Livery. He also underlined the need to align with and take advantage of the City Corporation's strengths in this respect.

Another Alderman commented that there appeared to be a disconnect in terms of those seeking people to fill roles and those being trained. He commented that, in his experience, those applying for positions often heard nothing back from employers. He commented that this could make applicants, particularly young people without adequate parental support, despondent and suggested that the City and City & Guilds might also consider introducing a charter of some sort to address this disconnect. Ms Donnelly underlined that one of the recommendations put forward in the Great Jobs report focused on employers and the responsibility on them with regard to inclusion and diversity in the broader sense and how they should treat applicants generally. She stated that the idea of a charter and how this might be kitemarked could work to effectively address this grey area and help improve relationships.

Finally, an Alderman commented that he felt that work of City & Guilds and its brand could be better known. He suggested that City & Guilds be asked to present further to the Committee later this year to highlight where progress had been made in relation to the need to operate more strategically and how this could be taken forward in coming years. The Chairman was supportive of this suggestion.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Ms Donnelly for her very interesting and informative presentation.

4. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 7 December 2022.

The Chairman took this opportunity to congratulate Alderman Prem Goyal on joining the Court of the World Traders and on becoming a Senior Advisor on India to IBDE's Economic and Commercial Diplomacy Advisory Group.

Matters Arising

Electoral Registration and Deadline for Entry onto Ward lists – The Chairman remarked that all should now have received their respective Ward lists.

Draft Bill for an Act of Common Council – The Chairman reported that the draft Bill had now had its first and second reading at the Court's last meeting and would come forward in March for its third and final reading. This concerned Presiding Officers at City elections. Whilst there had initially been some discussion as to the Bill also addressing eligibility to be an Alderman, the Chairman clarified that this was not now covered in the Bill that was currently progressing. He therefore asked that the Remembrancer and the Comptroller and City Solicitor update the Committee on progress on this particular matter. The Comptroller reported that the intention was for he and the Remembrancer to bring forward a joint paper to the Policy and Resources Committee on this matter and that they would also consult further on this with the Alderman who had initially queried this point and sharing the paper with the wider Committee. The Chair questioned whether this meant that the matter could be dealt with in a draft Bill that could have its first and second reading at the March meeting of the Court of Common Council and its third reading in April given that it would impact upon the timetable of any future Aldermanic elections and that the April Court was likely to be a largely new body of Members. Officers confirmed that they would work to progress the matter as quickly as possible. The Aldermen expressed support for the Bill having all three readings at the March meeting of Common Council, if at all possible, given that they intended to commence the election timetable next month.

RESOLVED: - That the minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 7 December be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. **COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS 2022/2023**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning nominations for the appointment of Aldermen on City of London Corporation Committees for 2022/23 as of 21st April 2022.

The Chairman explained that 2022/23 was a slightly unusual year in terms of appointments in that the Governance Review would see a number of changes such as the abolition of the Markets Committee as a Ward Committee meaning that there would be no automatic spaces on this for Aldermen in the same way that there had been previously. A number of changes to those elected to serve

on the Court of Aldermen were also anticipated later this year which might necessitate further changes to the proposals set out here in due course.

It was noted that Appendix B would need to be updated following the meeting.

Resolved: - That the Aldermen:

- i) Approve the nominations set out in the report and authorise their submission to the Court of Common Council at its meeting on 21st April 2022, excluding the appointments to the Honorable Irish Society which will be settled on 10th March 2022; and
- ii) Delegate authority to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen to approve any necessary revisions to the list of appointments.

6. APPOINTMENT - BRIDEWELL ROYAL HOSPITAL

The Committee considered the appointment of an Alderman to fill the vacancy due to arise on Bridewell Royal Hospital in 2022.

The Chairman commented that this might be a good opportunity for a junior Alderman to join the governing body of King Edward's School Whitley.

Two Aldermen currently serving on the body, one as Vice Chairman commented that it might be preferable to reconsider this appointment in September 2022 given the number of impending Aldermanic elections this year.

Resolved :- That the appointment be reconsidered following the outcome of this year's Aldermanic elections.

7. REVIEW OF WAIVER FOR GUILDS AND LIVERY COMPANIES - CONDUCT OF VIRTUAL BUSINESS

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk relative to the conduct of virtual business by Livery Companies and Guilds.

The Chairman explained that this was around extending the ability of Livery Companies and Guilds to meet in a hybrid fashion previously granted to them by the Court of Aldermen. He highlighted that the current permissions expired on 31 March 2022 and that proposals were now such that this should be extended to 31 October 2022.

The Chairman of the Magistracy and Livery Sub-Committee underlined that this was a temporary extension and that the Sub-Committee were therefore looking at whether a more permanent arrangement with the Liveries needed to be considered. They intended to consult with the Livery Committee on this matter.

Another Alderman suggested that there may be a degree of urgency around the need for a more permanent solution given that many were keen to see these arrangements which had worked successfully to date continue without restriction.

Resolved: - That:

- i) insofar as the Ordinances or By-Laws of any Company with Livery, Company without Livery or Guild contain restrictive or prescriptive provisions as to the location and timing of any meeting, election, installation or admission of any members or officers, the Court of Aldermen agrees to allow any reasonable variation to such provisions, to be determined by the Guild or Livery company concerned and to be valid until 31 October 2022;
- ii) in particular, procedures adopted on the occasion of the binding of apprentices may be conducted virtually, subject to the requirement for the indentures to be entered within six months of the decision being taken in the Books of the Chamberlain of London;
- iii) the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen review the decision in due course and consider the future position in respect of the conduct of Guild and Livery Company business, noting that more flexible ways of working are now bedded into most business practices.

8. AMENDMENT TO THE COURT OF ALDERMEN'S STANDING ORDERS

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning proposed amendments to the Court of Aldermen's Standing Orders, specifically SO 33, 35 and 36 to reflect current practice in terms of the administrative process in relation to Aldermanic attendance at the Judges' lunches at the Central Criminal Court.

The Chairman reported that there were now also proposals around amending SO20. Whilst a quorum of three members was felt to be appropriate for this Committee, the Aldermen were of the view that the quorum for the Nominations Committee ought to be thirteen members (i.e. a simple majority of the Court of Aldermen). It was agreed that this be inserted as SO20a.

It was also agreed that SO17 whereby the Chairman, or in their absence the Deputy Chairman of each of the standing Committees, had a casting vote should apply to this Committee only but was not appropriate procedurally for the Nominations Committee where, in practice, lots ought to be drawn in the event of a tied vote.

Discussion around this point ensued and it was highlighted that the Chairman or Deputy Chairman were not obliged to exercise their casting vote and could also choose not to exercise it immediately choosing to opt for a second, confirmatory vote amongst the Committee first for example.

With regard to SO 33 it was agreed that the words 'a sitting' be removed. It was also suggested that reference to needing to attend 'at least one day each month' reflected the old system and that it should now therefore read 'at least one day every five weeks'.

Finally, it was agreed that the document should no longer refer to junior and senior Aldermen but instead to Aldermen past the Chair and those below the Chair.

Resolved: - That the proposed revisions to the Court of Aldermen's Standing Orders, as set out in Appendix 2, be agreed by the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen and a recommendation thereon be submitted to the Court of Aldermen.

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

There were no questions.

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

There was no other business.

11. **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.

12. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 7th December 2021.

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

The Committee considered the late, separately circulated Non-Public Outstanding Actions List which had been updated since the last meeting on 7th December 2021.

14. **MINUTES - MAGISTRACY AND LIVERY SUB (GENERAL PURPOSES) COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the minutes of the previous meeting of the Magistracy and Livery Sub (General Purposes) Committee held on 16 December 2021.

15. **AMENDMENT TO TERMS OF REFERENCE - MAGISTRACY AND LIVERY SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive concerning revisions to the Magistracy and Livery Sub (General Purposes) Committee's Terms of Reference.

16. **LORD MAYOR'S SHOW - UPDATE**

The Chair of the Lord Mayor's Show Ltd was heard.

17. **UNITED GUILDS DONATION 2022**

The Remembrancer was heard relative to the United Guilds donation for 2022.

18. **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

The Committee noted the lists of forthcoming events and hospitality to be managed by the Events Teams at Mansion House and Guildhall (Remembrancer's Department).

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

There were no questions.

20. **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, two items of urgent business were considered whilst the public were excluded.

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

The Chairman was heard relative to a confidential matter.

The meeting ended at 12.28 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Gemma Stokley
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Committee(s) General Purposes Committee of Aldermen	Date: 30 March 2022
Subject: Aldermanic Resignations under the 70-year convention	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3 and 8
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	£0
What is the source of Funding?	NA
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	NA
Report of: The Town Clerk & Chief Executive, the Remembrancer and the Comptroller and City Solicitor	For Decision
Report author: Gemma Stokley, Acting Principal Committee and Member Services Manager, Town Clerk's Department	

Summary

This report concerns the convention that outlines that Aldermen should surrender office at age 70. This convention is entirely within the remit of the General Purposes Court of Aldermen to adhere to, suspend or amend as they see fit and a policy decision is now therefore required as to whether, for the reasons outlined within this report, this convention should be increased to require resignation at age 75.

The purpose of this report is to present Members with relevant information in order to consider whether to amend this particular Aldermanic convention last approved by the General Purposes Committee in July 1998. It is timely to review this now in order to give clarity to all interested parties ahead of any Aldermanic elections scheduled for the remainder of this year.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen now formally agree that, for the reasons set out within this report, the long-standing convention around the need to surrender office at the age of 70 be increased to age 75 with immediate effect and that the undertakings (Appendix 1) be updated accordingly. It is further recommended that a dedicated Working Party be established to consider future issues concerning Aldermanic terms of office/tenure.

Main Report

Background

1. With regard to Aldermanic elections, the clear constitutional position is that an Alderman is elected for life, subject to disqualification in certain circumstances. The legal responsibility for decisions relating to Aldermanic elections lies solely

with the Court of Aldermen. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Aldermanic and Common Council elections have not been held in 2020 or 2021 and this Committee took a decision to waive all conventions in relation to Aldermanic elections until March 2022. Whilst Aldermen are technically elected for life, the conventions in place before the waiver dictated that they should retire at age 70 and seek re-election every 6 years.

2. A number of Aldermen have therefore been unable to stand for election or retire as expected under these conventions.
3. There are now nine wards where there is either a current vacancy or where the convention in place prior to the waiver would state that an election is now due.
4. The conventions are entirely within the remit of this Committee to adhere to, amend or suspend as it sees fit.

Main Report

Background

5. As summarised in the Wardmote Book, historically, Aldermen have held office for life, but it is a convention of the Court of Aldermen to surrender office at the end of a six-year term and to retire at the age of 70. This approach was approved by the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen at its meeting on 2 July 1998. Consequently, the anticipated Aldermanic election date differs for each Ward and there is no 'all-out' election for Aldermen. Under section 3 of the Act of Common Council of 14 July 1960 if an Alderman dies, is disqualified or offers to surrender their office, the Town Clerk is to report this to the next regular meeting of the Court of Aldermen. Under section 4 of the same Act, in the case of an offer to surrender office, the election is then to take place within forty-two working days after the acceptance by the Court of that offer.
6. The legal position therefore remains that Aldermen are elected for life and subject to removal for "just and reasonable cause", criminal conviction resulting in a sentence of imprisonment and bankruptcy. They retire permanently at 70 and submit to re-election at six yearly intervals by convention only.
7. Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and following legal advice from the Comptroller and City Solicitor's Office, Members were advised that it would be open to the Court of Aldermen to decline to accept an offer of surrender in the then circumstances (i.e., given the danger and impracticalities of holding an election), assuming that the Alderman concerned was willing to continue in office. As it is a matter of convention by resolution of the Aldermen that they serve a six-year term and retire at the age of 70, it therefore follows that this practice could be suspended by the Court of Aldermen in order to avoid an election being held during a time when it is not safe to do so or where there are other good reasons to defer an election.

Current position

8. Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, the Court of Aldermen has not considered, formally, whether it wishes to amend the convention around the age of retirement. It was agreed on 10 July 2020 to waive the conventions until March 2022 and to then review the position further at this stage. There is no suggestion that the convention around the need to seek re-election every six years is altered and this should therefore be reinstated.
9. The Court of Aldermen should now therefore formally consider its position in respect of the retirement age convention specifically and the holding of future Aldermanic elections in order to give clarity to all interested parties.

Judicial retirement age

10. The retirement age for Judges is currently 70, however the parliamentary process for increasing this to 75 is now complete and Royal Assent has now also been received, thereby bringing this into effect. It is felt that there are sound reasons for maintaining a historic link with the judicial retirement age.
11. The Remembrancer has commented as follows -

The Aldermen of the City of London have a very long association with the administration of justice. This is reflected in the civic constitution through their statutory position in having the status of judges of the Central Criminal Court and in the qualification to stand for the Office of Alderman, one alternative element of which is that the individual seeking election is qualified to sit as a magistrate.

The judicial retirement age is therefore relevant to the qualification for the Office of Alderman and informed the application of the age limit of 70 years when that age limit was applied to judicial offices. The raising of the age limit for those offices to 75 enables the Court of Aldermen, if it so wishes, to adjust the age limit applied to the Office of Alderman to the revised retirement age applied to judicial offices to maintain the alignment.

Conclusion

12. As outlined above, there is good reason why formal consideration of the Aldermanic convention around retirement age is now recommended. Members are therefore now asked to agree upon a way forward and to instruct Officers to amend the Undertakings at Appendix 1 accordingly (specifically paragraph e).

Contact:

Gemma Stokley

Acting Principal Committee and Member Services Manager

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APPENDIX 1



The Undertakings

1. The Town Clerk will send all Aldermen a copy of the following undertaking which was agreed at the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of 25th March 2003:-

“Resolved that the Town Clerk be instructed to inform all newly elected and existing Aldermen that individual members were expected to follow the following undertakings and that failure to do so would be one of the factors taken into account in assessing the suitability of Aldermen for any office:-

- a) to serve faithfully the offices of Alderman and Magistrate and, if elected, the offices of Sheriff and Lord Mayor;
- b) to continue, subject to paragraph e) below, to serve as an Alderman for at least a further term of six years after having served the Office of Lord Mayor and to take all practicable steps to secure re-election to achieve this;
- c) to carry out such obligations as the Lord Chancellor may stipulate from time to time for both newly appointed Magistrates and currently officiating Magistrates in relation to training, attendance at Courts and visits to prisons and other institutions;
- d) to acquaint the Court of Aldermen of any professional or domestic matter of which the Alderman is aware which he/she believes might be capable of casting doubt on his/her ability or suitability to continue as an Alderman or a Magistrate and/or which may attract adverse publicity either to him/her or to the City of London Corporation or to both;

- e) to tender his/her resignation from the Office of Alderman on attaining the age of 70;
 - f) to refrain from adjudicating in his/her capacity as an Alderman of the City of London in any trial at the Central Criminal Court, save in accordance with public statute or as Lord Mayor;
 - g) on ceasing to hold the Office of Alderman of the City of London, to resign as Vice-President or Governor of Bridewell Royal Hospital, in the event of him/her holding such Office at the time;
 - h) to seek formal leave of the Court for any continuous period of absence abroad which might exceed four weeks”.
2. Each Aldermen will be asked to sign a statement that they have read and understand the Undertakings.
 3. New Aldermen will be asked by the Town Clerk to provide a detailed curriculum vitae when they are admitted. (There is no prescribed form.)

I confirm that I have read and understood the above Undertakings.

Signed.....

Date.....

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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