

CIVIC AFFAIRS SUB-COMMITTEE
Friday, 7 October 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee held at Committee Room, West Wing 2nd Floor, Guildhall on Friday, 7 October 2022 at 10.00 am and available to view at www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mPbcuJJ0m8&t=338s

Present

Members:

Deputy Edward Lord (Chair)
Deputy Simon Duckworth (Chief Commoner) (Deputy Chairman)
Mary Durcan
Emily Benn
James Bromiley-Davis
Alderman Sir William Russell
Wendy Mead

In Attendance (Observing Online)

Tijs Broeke
Alderman Gregory Jones KC
Giles Shilson

Officers:

Jenna Brassett	- Chamberlain's Department
Rachel Cartwright	- Remembrancer's Office
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor
Mathew Cooper	- Town Clerk's Department
Leann Corachea	- Remembrancer's Office
Polly Dunn	- Town Clerk's Department
Paul Double	- City Remembrancer
William Elliott	- Innovation and Growth
June Haynes	- Town Clerk's Department
Claire Holdgate	- Innovation and Growth
Fiona Hoban	- Remembrancer's Office
Caroline Jack	- Executive Director and Private Secretary to Lord Mayor
Nigel Lefton	- Remembrancer's Office
Greg Moore	- Assistant Town Clerk
Peter Ochser	- City Surveyor's Department
Dorian Price	- City Surveyor's Department
Chris Rumbles	- Town Clerk's Department
Bob Roberts	- Deputy Town Clerk
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Paul Wright	- Deputy Remembrancer

The Chair confirmed their intention to change the running order of the agenda to take non-public items during the first part of the meeting. The Remembrancer would need to be away from the meeting early to attend a freedom ceremony and, given the substantive items in the non-public part of the agenda were reports in his name, it was considered appropriate to deal with these items first. Members were in agreement with the re-ordering of the agenda as proposed.

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That Members agreed to exclude the public for the following matters relating to functions of the Court of Common Council which were not subject to the provisions of Part VA and Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, relating to public access to meetings.

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

11. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the non-public minutes of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee meeting on 18 July 2022 be approved as an accurate record.

12. DELEGATED AUTHORITY REPORT

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Remembrancer detailing delegated action taken between meetings.

Benefices

13. CHAIR TO BE HEARD

The Chair provided the Sub-Committee with an oral update relating to Benefices.

Hospitality

14. APPLICATIONS FOR HOSPITALITY

The Sub-Committee considered several applications for hospitality.

a) Application A

b) Application B

c) Application C

15. APPLICATIONS FOR THE USE OF GREAT HALL

The Sub-Committee considered a report detailing applications for the use of Guildhall.

16. FORTHCOMING COMMITTEE OR COURT EVENTS INVOLVING HOSPITALITY

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Remembrancer detailing forthcoming Committee or Court events involving hospitality.

17. **FORTHCOMING CORPORATE AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT EVENTS**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Director of Innovation and Growth detailing corporate and stakeholder engagement events.

18. **SUMMARY OF COMMITTED HOSPITALITY FUNDING FOR 2021-22, 2022-23 AND 2023-24**

The Sub-Committee received a joint report of the Chamberlain and Remembrancer detailing committed hospitality funding.

19. **VARIOUS RECEPTIONS - FINAL ACCOUNTS**

The Sub-Committee received a joint report of the Chamberlain and Remembrancer detailing various receptions – final accounts.

20. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

City Corporation Logo - A Member raised a question relating to use of the City Corporation's crest and logo.

21. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There were no additional items of business.

Part 3 – Confidential Agenda

22. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the confidential minutes of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee meeting on 18 July 2022 be approved as an accurate record.

23. **STATE OCCASIONS**

The Remembrancer was heard relating to state occasions.

At the conclusion of non-public and confidential items of business, the Town Clerk confirmed the intention to move to consideration of the public part of the agenda at this point in the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Sophie Fernandes, Nick Bensted-Smith, Brian Mooney, Keith Bottomley and Ian Luder.

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

Edward Lord and Mary Durcan confirmed they were guests at a recent City Property Association leadership dinner.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the public minutes of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee meeting held on 18 July 2022 be approved as an accurate record.

4. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Town Clerk providing Members with a work programme of relevant items relating to the work of the Sub-Committee. Updates were noted as follows:

Parental Arrangements for Members – Information was currently being collated into one document for Members' ease of reference detailing the parental provision already available through existing provision. The Chair proposed a deadline of 31st October for completion of the document.

A Member questioned whether the booklet would assist Members of the public and it was clarified that it would be exclusive to Members due to access requirements and certain locations not being open to the public.

Members Workspace Requirements – Three rooms were now available on the mezzanine level for the Chairman of Finance, Chairman of Planning and Transportation Committee and Deputy Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee. Work continued through assessing options for full dial in capability for virtual meetings being built into each room, but with cabling for this proving expensive and with alternative options being explored e.g., one room with shared use for virtual meetings. Additional funding options would otherwise need to be explored.

The Chair proposed a deadline be set of week beginning 10th October for the Deputy Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee's move from his temporary to permanent office on the mezzanine level.

The Chair requested an update relating to space being identified for Innovation and Growth and their move to an alternative location. Members noted this continued to be worked through with the space identified meaning a potential income loss for IG and the department needing to come back with a firm proposal in this regard.

The City Surveyor confirmed a report was due to be presented and considered by Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee later in the month when alternative options were being considered, following which a clearer picture would emerge.

The Chair requested that they and the Deputy Chairman be kept up to date on progress in identifying an alternative location for Innovation and Growth, with the current agreement being that the Members' room on the 2nd floor West Wing being used by Chairs and Deputy Chairs would be handed over to Members for general use as soon as the Members currently using this space could move elsewhere.

Review of the Members' Financial Assistance Scheme - A Meeting has taken place with the Chair of London Councils Independent Remuneration Panel. An extensive list of information the Panel require to assist them in their consideration of the Scheme has been provided, which once received by the Panel would allow them an opportunity to assess the level of work required and present a cost for this.

The Chair reminded Members that delegated authority had previously been granted to approve final instructions and a fee for an Independent Panel review of the City Corporation's Financial Assistance Scheme and that that this could be progressed, and the necessary approval sought at an appropriate point.

The Assistant Town Clerk referred to an additional consideration relating to payments to Members. Payments were currently on a quarterly basis but with this frequency of payment presenting an unintended consequence for individual in receipt of benefits. An opt in scheme was an option being explored with payments moving to a monthly frequency. The Chair remarked on the whole point of the Members' Financial Assistance Scheme being to support Members and if it proved easier for Members to opt in on a monthly basis then this option should be supported.

The Town Clerk added how there was a need to explore with the external provider if there would be any additional cost involved for administering a monthly payment, but that he would take this away and review options.

RESOLVED: That Members receive the report and note its content.

5. **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NOS. 41(A) AND 41(B)**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Town Clerk advising Members of action taken by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, in accordance with Standing Order Nos. 41(a) and 41(b).

The Deputy Chairman referred to usage of the Members' bedrooms and his concern that these were being block booked and used on occasions other than official use, with the bookings benefiting from a significant subsidy. The Chair added how any booking outside of official use would incur a cost; if a Member was block booking and claiming official use then this would be of concern, but otherwise where a Member was paying for their overnight stay then they did not consider it a significant issue.

The Chair further commented on provision already in place to refer any issues of concern to them and the Deputy Chairman. A Member questioned the existing demand on rooms and whether there was any issue in meeting this, with it generally being accepted that there would be pressure on rooms around major events.

A Member suggested it would be helpful to understand current usage levels, at which point the Assistant Town Clerk confirmed current monthly usage

statistics for the Members' Bedrooms showing an average level of occupancy of 65-80%, which Members noted.

RESOLVED: That the report be received, and its content noted.

6. MEMBERS LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk providing Members with an update in respect of Members' learning, development and training issues and seeking authority to establish a refreshed Member Learning and Development Steering Group in order to take this work forward.

The Town Clerk updated Members on work that had taken place to date through a comparison exercise with Local Authorities to understand learning and development provided elsewhere, in consulting Chief Officers to consider the learning and development Members would benefit from to fulfil their role and through looking at the potential of introducing a discreet digital area for Members related specifically to their learning and development.

Members noted the current learning and development strategy had been tested against current best practice to understand where there were any gaps, all of which would go through the Members Development Steering Group before coming back to Civic Affairs Sub-Committee.

The Chair welcomed what they considered to be a very helpful and informative report and thanked the officers for all their work in preparing it. The Chair proposed that the Town Clerk write to all Members of Civic Affairs Sub-Committee seeking expressions of interest in filing the two available places on the Member Development Steering Group.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Note the information in the report and the progress made;
- Approve the refresh and proposed membership of the Member Learning and Development Steering Group and revised Terms of Reference and to;
- Approve option 2.

7. MEMBER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Comptroller and City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer presenting the City Corporation's current Code of Conduct for Members to review against the Model Code of Conduct produced by the Local Government Association (LGA).

The Chairman remarked on their instinct being a need to move closer to the LGA model through introduction of a hybrid version of the Code of Conduct, using the best parts of the City Corporation's Code of Conduct and add these to the LGA's Code Model Code of Conduct.

The Chair proposed an amalgamated version of the Code of Conduct be produced for the next meeting of Civic Affairs Sub-Committee to allow

Members an opportunity to consider this further, following which consultation could take place with the wider Members of the Court before taking a final version forward to Policy and Resources Committee and Court of Common Council seeking approval.

The Comptroller referred to some of the language used in the LGA's Code being more modern and legalistic and so it may be worth including this wording in the City Corporation's version.

A Member offered their endorsement of a hybrid version, whilst adding the importance of bearing in mind that many Members would be regulated in their own right in their professional life, with enhanced conduct rules that they already need to adhere to. It was suggested that the Members' Code of Conduct would need to tie in with Members in their professional capacity.

The Chair responded to this point and remarked on how previous consideration of the Members Code of Conduct had a number of previous incumbents not wanting a link between their professional code and the Members' Code of Conduct.

The Chair proposed that no decision be taken today, and that the Comptroller be asked to take time to amalgamate the two codes and come back in December with an updated version for Members to consider, following which consultation could take place with the wider Members of the Court before taking a final version to Court of Common Council in March 2023.

The Comptroller added how there was no immediate rush to produce an updated Members' Code of Conduct with there being nothing wrong with the City Corporation's existing version.

RESOLVED: That Members:

- Agreed that the Comptroller and City Solicitor produce an amalgamated version of the LGA Model Code of Conduct and City Corporation's Code of Conduct for Members for further consideration and review.

8. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

A Member questioned if there was any update on the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee Strategy Session and the Chair confirmed 9th December was currently being considered as an option, but with the final date still to be determined and confirmed with Members in due course.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Budget - The Chair referred to a need for a financial report from the Chamberlain drawing together budgets over which Civic Affairs Sub-Committee has oversight, with the Chamberlain tying together the different budgetary strands so they can all be presented to this Sub-Committee.

The meeting ended at 11.56am

Chairman

Contact Officer: Chris Rumbles
christopher.rumbles@cityoflondon.gov.uk