

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF ALDERMEN
Tuesday, 15 October 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held at
Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 15 October 2024 at
10.00 am

Present

Members:

Alderman Sir William Russell (Chairman)
The Rt. Hon the Lord Mayor Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli
Alderman Sir Peter Estlin
Alderman Vincent Keaveny, CBE
Alderman Alison Gowman CBE
Alderman Timothy Hailes JP
Alderman Robert Howard
Alderman & Sheriff Gregory Jones KC
Alderman Prem Goyal, OBE
Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney
Alderman Bronek Masojada
Alderman Alexander Barr
Alderman Christopher Makin
Alderman Tim Levene
Alderwoman Martha Grekos
Alderman Simon Pryke
Alderwoman Elizabeth Anne King, BEM JP

Officers:

Michael Cogher	- Comptroller & City Solicitor
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- Chamberlain
Paul Wright	- City Remembrancer
Paul Wilkinson	- City Surveyor
Robert Murphy	- Investment Property Director
Polly Dunn	- Interim Assistant Town Clerk
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
James Edwards	- Remembrancer's Department
Tim Rolph	- Swordbearer
Rhiannon Leary	- Executive Officer to the Court of Aldermen
Lisa Ward	- Interim Director of Communications Transformation and Strategy
Siobhan Harley	- Election Engagement Campaign Manager

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

Apologies for absence were received from Alderman Sir Charles Bowman (Deputy Chairman), Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley, Alderman Sir Nicholas Lyons, Alderman Alastair King, DL, Alderman Professor Emma Edhem, Alderwoman Dame Susan Langley, DBE, Alderwoman Jennette Newman and Alderman Kawsar Zaman.

Apologies were also reported from the Town Clerk and Chief Executive.

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 17 September 2024.

RESOLVED: - That the minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 17 September 2024 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **APPOINTMENTS: -**

a) **Emanuel School**

The Town Clerk reported that this vacancy was recently advertised to the full Court of Common Council having previously been advertised to the Court of Aldermen. One expression of interest from Common Councillor Paul Singh had been received and his supporting statement had been circulated to all prior to the meeting. The Committee were now therefore asked to consider their support of Mr Singh as the Aldermanic nominee for the School to then consider his Governorship in accordance with their own internal processes.

An Alderman spoke in favour of the nomination, noting that Mr Singh was also an alumnus of the School. They went on to ask, however, that consideration be given as to how all appointees to Aldermanic outside bodies might report back to the Court going forward.

An Alderwoman queried whether attendance records which were publicly available were a relevant consideration in making such nominations/appointments. The Chairman reiterated that, in this instance, a final decision would be taken by the School having first met with nominees and clarified to them the time commitment involved in their governorship. There were also mechanisms by which Outside Bodies could flag concerns as to attendance/levels of engagement with the Town Clerk and the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee.

In terms of reporting back and the system by which the Court of Aldermen appointed to Outside Bodies, the Chairman clarified that the

Town Clerk would be reporting back on this in more detail in the new year.

b) City & Guilds of London Institute

The Town Clerk reported that a nominee for the City & Guilds of London Institute for a term ending in April 2026 was sought in the room of Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli who was stepping down from this role after over a decade.

The Town Clerk undertook to circulate further details on the time commitment involved with the appointment and specific skills set sought.

In terms of wider appointments, the Chairman also reported that, by convention, the Senior Alderman Below the Chair (SABTAC) took up an Aldermanic spot on the Policy and Resources Committee after the Silent Ceremony – this would be Alderwoman Dame Susan Langley in this instance.

Finally, the Committee were asked to recommend the appointment of Alderman and Sheriff Gregory Jones as a Director of the Lord Mayor's Show in his capacity as the new Aldermanic Sheriff.

RESOLVED – That the Committee:

- a) Agree to nominate Paul Singh CC to Emanuel School, for a three-year term expiring in October 2027;
- b) Defer the appointment of an Aldermanic representative on the City & Guilds of London Institute to their next meeting pending further information as to the likely time commitment, meeting patterns and skills set sought;
- c) Agree the appointment of Alderwoman Dame Susan Langley to one of the Aldermanic slots on the Policy and Resources Committee after the Silent Ceremony;
- d) Recommend the appointment of Alderman and Sheriff Gregory Jones as a Director of the Lord Mayor's Show.

5. ACT OF COMMON COUNCIL - ANNUAL ELECTION OF WARD BEADLES

The Committee considered a joint report of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive, the Comptroller and City Solicitor and the Remembrancer.

An Alderman noted that whilst the Court of Aldermen was a sovereign body in its own right and part of the wider Court of Common Council, it required a sub-Committee of the Common Council to take the recommendation forward – in this instance the Policy and Resources Committee.

RESOLVED - That the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen approve the report for onward submission to the Policy and Resources Committee with the recommendation that they recommend to the Court of Common Council the passing of an Act of Common Council in the form set out in Appendix 1 for the reasons articulated here.

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

Special Meeting of the Court of Aldermen – 8 November 2024

An Alderwoman referred to notice of a special meeting of the Court of Aldermen to be held ahead of the Silent Ceremony on 8 November 2024 which had recently been received by all. She queried why the business to be transacted here could not be dealt with today or at the early December meeting.

The Town Clerk clarified that under Aldermanic Standing Orders, it was the Lord Mayor's prerogative to call additional meetings of the Court of Aldermen where there was sufficient business to transact. On this occasion, that business would involve the receipt of letters of resignation and, conscious of the workload of the Electoral Services Team in the lead up to the all-out March Common Council elections, it had been deemed a better use of resources for letters to be submitted in November. The Silent Ceremony was also the occasion on which the Lord Mayor stepped down and he had deemed it preferable to submit his letter of resignation at this juncture as opposed to today when he still had a month in office remaining.

The Alderwoman remarked that in terms of timetabling, it appeared that many Aldermanic elections seemed to be called around the Christmas and Summer Recess period which could translate to a lower turnout of voters. She therefore queried whether consideration should be given to fixing election dates for Aldermen going forward. The Chairman responded to underline that Aldermen were effectively elected for life and surrendered office by convention at the age of 75 or after having served six-year terms. Historically, therefore, it had been left to individuals to choose the timing of the submission of their letters of resignation within these parameters. The Comptroller and City Solicitor reiterated that Aldermen were elected for life as a matter of law and that neither this Court nor the Court of Common Council therefore had the power to fix the electoral period, they could agree conventions (and these could be altered) but they remained just that.

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

There were no additional, urgent items of business for consideration.

8. **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.

9. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 17 September 2024.

10. **PRESENTATION - PROPERTY STRATEGY**
The Committee heard a presentation of the Investment Property Director and the City Survey on the City's Investment Property Portfolio.
11. **PRESENTATION - BEST PRACTICE SOCIAL MEDIA USE FOR ALDERMEN AND ALDERWOMEN.**
The Committee heard a presentation of the Interim Director of Communications Transformation and Strategy and the Election Engagement Campaign Manager on Social Media use.
12. **APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY SHERIFFS' YEOMEN**
The Committee considered and approved a report of the City Remembrancer relative to the Appointment of Honorary Sheriff's Yeomen.
13. **ALDERMANIC STRATEGY GROUP THREE UPDATE**
Aldermanic Strategy Group Three updated the Committee on progress on the 'Court of Aldermen 2024' document.
14. **KEY COMMITTEE ISSUES**
Aldermen were given the opportunity to report on recent, wider Committee issues of strategic importance.
15. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions raised in the non-public session.
16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
Items of business concerning the Honourable Artillery Company, the Purdah period for the late Lord Mayor and Lord Mayor elect and insignia for the Lord Mayor's Aldermanic Representatives (LMARs) were discussed.
17. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**
The Committee considered and approved the confidential minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 15 October 2024.

The meeting ended at 12.20pm

Chairman

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