



## General Purposes Committee of Aldermen

**Date:** TUESDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2024  
**Time:** 10.00 am  
**Venue:** COMMITTEE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

**Members:**

Alderman Sir William Russell (Chairman)	Alderman Professor Emma Edhem
Alderman Sir Charles Bowman (Deputy Chairman)	Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney
The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor Ald. Michael Mainelli	Alderwoman Dame Susan Langley, DBE
Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley	Alderman Bronek Masojada
Alderman Sir Peter Estlin	Alderman Alexander Barr
Alderman Vincent Keaveny, CBE	Alderman Christopher Makin
Alderman Sir Nicholas Lyons	Alderman Tim Levene
Alderman Alastair King DL	Alderwoman Jennette Newman
Alderman Alison Gowman CBE	Alderman Kawsar Zaman
Alderman Timothy Hailes JP	Alderwoman Martha Grekos
Alderman Robert Howard	Alderman Simon Pryke
Alderman & Sheriff Gregory Jones, KC	Alderwoman Elizabeth Anne King, BEM JP
Alderman Prem Goyal, OBE	

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

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**Ian Thomas CBE**  
**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 minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 17 September 2024.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 7 - 14)

4. **APPOINTMENTS:-**

a) **Emanuel School**

To consider the appointment of a nominee to Emanuel School, for a three-year term expiring in October 2027.

(No Contest)

**Nominations received:-**

Paul Singh

b) **City & Guilds of London Institute**

To approve the appointment of an Alderman to the City & Guilds of London Institute for a period ending April 2026.

**For Decision**

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

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

**For Decision**  
(Pages 15 - 26)

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 17 September 2024.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 27 - 34)

10. **PRESENTATION - PROPERTY STRATEGY**

The City Surveyor to be heard.

**For Discussion**

11. **PRESENTATION - BEST PRACTICE SOCIAL MEDIA USE FOR ALDERMEN AND ALDERWOMEN.**

The Interim Director of Communications Transformation and Strategy and the Election Engagement Manager to be heard.

**For Discussion**

12. **APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY SHERIFFS' YEOMEN**

Report of the City Remembrancer.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 35 - 38)

13. **ALDERMANIC STRATEGY GROUP THREE UPDATE**

**For Information**

14. **KEY COMMITTEE ISSUES**

**For Discussion**

15. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
  
16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

**Part 3 - Confidential**

17. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

To approve the confidential minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 17 September 2024.

**For Decision**

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## GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF ALDERMEN Tuesday, 17 September 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 17 September 2024 at 10.00 am

### Present

#### Members:

Alderman Sir William Russell (Chairman)  
Alderman Sir Charles Bowman (Deputy Chairman)  
Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley  
Alderman Sir Peter Estlin  
Alderman Alastair King DL  
Alderman Timothy Hailes JP  
Alderman Robert Howard  
Alderman & Sheriff Gregory Jones KC  
Alderman Professor Emma Edhem  
Alderman Bronek Masojada  
Alderman Alexander Barr  
Alderman Christopher Makin  
Alderman Tim Levene  
Alderwoman Jennette Newman  
Alderwoman Martha Grekos  
Alderman Simon Pryke  
Alderwoman Elizabeth Anne King, BEM JP

#### Officers:

Ian Thomas, CBE	- Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Greg Moore	- Deputy Town Clerk
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor
Caroline Al-Beyerty	- The Chamberlain
Katie Foster	- Remembrancer's Department
Caroline Jack	- Executive Director, Private Secretary to Lord Mayor
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Rhiannon Leary	- Executive Officer to the Court of Aldermen

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor, Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli, Alderman Vincent Keaveny, Alderman Alison Gowman, CBE, Alderman Prem Goyal, OBE, Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney, Alderwoman & Sheriff Dame Susan Langley and Alderman Kawsar Zaman.

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 16 July 2024.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**Appointments** (page 6) – The Town Clerk reported that the Court of Aldermen's proposed external nominee to Emanuel School had since been appointed directly by the Trust to another existing vacancy in their own right. This therefore left the Court's nomination still vacant. The position had been offered to all Aldermen with no expressions of interest received to date. This would now therefore be advertised to all members of the Court of Common Council within the standard vacancies letter for October alongside details of the specific skills that the School were currently seeking. A final decision on the nomination would then be made at the next meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen.

**Chairman's Congratulatory Remarks**

The Chairman congratulated Alderman Emma Edhem for having been made Professor in Practice for Space Economy, Technology & Innovation at Durham University's Space Research Centre, meaning that she therefore now held a dual Professorship at Durham.

It was reported that Alderman Edhem also now sat on the Strategic Advisory Board of Space Aye along with others from the Space Sector, MoD and RAF.

Congratulations were also offered to Alderman Goyal who had been made a non-executive Director of Greengage, a FinTech Company in the City of London.

**RESOLVED:** - That the minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 16 July 2024 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **PRESENTATION - MEDIEVAL ALDERMEN - PROFESSOR CAROLINE BARRON**

The Chairman welcomed Professor Caroline Barron to the meeting who presented on 'The Aldermen of London in 1446'.

Professor Barron referred to the Corporation of London's records on the 'Journals of the Court of Common Council' which were, in fact, the records of the Court of Aldermen. Records of meetings began in 1416 and listed those present as well as meeting dates and the business of the Court which was presented in Latin. Professor Barron went on to share a collection of drawings of Medieval Aldermen, produced in 1446-7 by one of the Heralds, John Roger Lee, who was Clarenceux King of Arms. All Aldermen were depicted holding placards featuring the name of their Ward, the idea being that successive



Aldermen for each Ward would have their own coat of arms added to the placard. An illustration was also produced of the Recorder.

Professor Barron remarked on the two different hat styles shown in the illustrations. She went on to remark that, in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, there was a growing interest in heraldry and in chivalry generally - that this was mostly confined to the gentry and aristocracy but was also spreading to London. At this time, Edward III had also already established the Order of the Garter with the statutes of the order being revised in 1421, directing that the arms of all the Knights of the Order should be placed on the stalls in St George's Chapel. It was reported that the reorganisation of the Knights Garter was the work of William Bruges who produced the 'Garter Book' depicting all of the Knights – it was highlighted how comparable this was with the illustrations of the London Aldermen and the placards they were depicted carrying. The difficulty for the Aldermen at the time was that they tended to move around from Ward to Ward which made these placards difficult to construct and update.

Professor Barron went on to speak of Guildhall Chapel, stating that there had been an idea that each Alderman would have a stall here in the same way that the Garter Knights did in St George's in Windsor. This did not, however, come to fruition for various reasons. The Chapel, completed in the 1440s, became a courtroom after the reformation and lasted until approximately 1840 when it was pulled down.

The drawings of the Aldermen were not kept at the Guildhall and were never in the possession of the Corporation of London but instead remained at the College of Arms. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the illustrations were in the possession of the 7<sup>th</sup> Duke of Newcastle. His library was sold in 1938 at which point the drawings had already been separated. 16 of the illustrations were purchased by Viscount Wakefield who gave them to the British Library. The other illustrations were in the possession of another gentleman who presented these to the Guildhall Library. The British Library also decided to gift the 16 drawings in their possession to the Guildhall Library, reuniting the collection in the 1930s. They now reside at the London Metropolitan Archives.

Professor Barron focused in particular on the Alderman of Bishopsgate Ward, Thomas Chalton Mercer, who was depicted wearing a straw hat unlike the other Aldermen. She commented that he hailed from Bedfordshire and queried whether this hat therefore reflected an industry there at the time but welcomed any other theories that the current Aldermen might have on this.

Professor Barron reported that biographies of all 25 Aldermen had been constructed, remarking that some were also MPs, making it easier to gather background information on them. All of the Aldermen were married, with the exception of two for whom there was no evidence of this. Not all of the Aldermen left wills making it more difficult to find out about their family life. 17 of the 25 had surviving children, many of these just one surviving child, reflecting the population dip in England at this time. This was in contrast to the rest of Europe where the population had, for the most part, risen again following the Black Death in 1350. All but two of the Aldermen of the time came from outside

of London. Many also came from modest family backgrounds as opposed to dynastic families. The Aldermen at the time hailed from Norfolk, Newcastle, Bedfordshire, Devon, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Suffolk, Cheshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Somerset, Bristol, Leicestershire, Buckinghamshire and Kent. All, however, chose to be buried in London depicting that their loyalties lay here.

Professor Barron concluded by highlighting that she was currently Chairman of the London Records Society who published a volume of records relating to London annually at a cost of approximately £4-5k. This volume, complete with full page illustrations was likely to be more akin to £10,000. All Aldermen were therefore encouraged to become members of the Records Society to help contribute to the costs or encouraged to suggest organisations/charities that might be in a position to bridge the gap in required funding this year.

The Chairman thanked Professor Barron for her presentation and invited questions. The Chairman commented that there was a placard similar to that shown in the illustrations in St Margaret, Lothbury Church in Coleman Street Ward.

An Alderman questioned whether there were any particular periods in history where there was a dearth of information on the Aldermen. He highlighted that a Court of Aldermen 2024 publication was currently in production which would be a helpful snapshot of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Court. Professor Barron reiterated that surviving records began from 1416 and commented that, at this time, the Court of Aldermen was the governing body of the City of London, meeting as often as 3-4 times per week. The Court of Common Council met much less frequently, normally around 3-4 times per year. The 'City's Letterbooks' were more formal records dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century, providing further information as to the evolution of the Court of Aldermen. She highlighted that the position of Alderman was originally hereditary but gradually became elective with those in each Ward able to choose these or present a choice of candidates for final decision by the Court of Aldermen. It was reported that the early records of the Court of Aldermen were mainly concerned with details of minor misdemeanours with bigger political issues much more carefully recorded.

Another Alderman commented upon the parallels between the modern Court and that which had been articulated by Professor Barron today. He commented that the current Court of Aldermen also represented a diversity of backgrounds and experience with many hailing from outside of London.

An Alderwoman queried what links the London Records Society had with the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) which were funded and managed by the City Corporation and that both seemed to have the same aims. Professor Barron reported that the London Records Society existed to publish records whereas the LMA was focused on the preservation of records for researchers to consult. In terms of assistance to help publish this material, Professor Barron reiterated that any financial assistance from the Court of Aldermen collectively or from individual Aldermen becoming members of the Records Society would be of great assistance.

In response to a question, Professor Barron reported that the Alderman for Portsoken Ward was depicted in different attire to the others given that he was also the Prior of Holy Trinity.

An Alderman referenced works by Alfred Beavan on the Court of Aldermen and also those of John McEwan. Professor Barron also commended the work of Alfred Beavan in documenting the members of the Court of Aldermen. She added that John McEwan was a post-graduate of hers.

An Alderman queried to what extent any work had been done to look at the early construction of the constitution of the USA and how much it may have been influenced by the City of London. He commented that New York also had Aldermen at one stage and that there appeared to therefore be some parallels. Professor Barron stated that she was not aware of any work examining this particular theory and commented that the French influence on the US constitution was generally well recognised. She highlighted that there were works by Ian Doolittle on the constitutional aspects of the development of the City of London and how this was kept separate from Westminster, the battles won and compromises made in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in this respect. The Alderman went on to remark on the shift of power from the Court of Aldermen to the Court of Common Council and queried whether there were any works on this documenting the history of this drift.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Professor Barron for an extremely informative presentation.

In response to a questions around potential funding sources, the Town Clerk reported that this would be the subject of further discussion in non-public session where the Committee would either feel able to take a decision today or request a report to a future meeting before formally doing so.

5. **SHRIEVAL PLAN 2024/25**

The Town Clerk tabled the Shrieval Plan 2024/25 on behalf of Sheriff-Elect Jones and Sheriff-Elect Chalk.

Alderman Jones presented the Plan on behalf of both Sheriffs Elect and highlighted that this had also been drawn up in consultation with the Secretariat Director at Mansion House. Previous versions of the plan had been shared with the Recorder. Alderman Jones thanked the current Lord Mayor, SABTAC and to the current Aldermanic Sheriffs who had provided both oral and written briefings to date which had been incredibly helpful. Alderman Jones commented that both Sheriffs Elect were also very conscious of resource implications in the Shrieval Corridor at the Old Bailey. Some of the proposed events would therefore be sponsored by City law firms and others which would bring in their representatives and their various networks but would also relieve some administrative burden for staff at the Old Bailey in terms of processing invitations and the like.

It was underlined that the primary role of the Sheriffs was to support the work of the Lord Mayor in promoting financial and professional services, noting that the Shrieval year overlapped two mayoralities. It was noted that much of what was planned had been drawn up in consultation with SABTAC. The role was also about supporting the judiciary and these aspects of the plan had been discussed with the Recorder who was very keen for the Old Bailey to be used as a resource for promoting events concerning the rule of law. Alderman Jones referenced various lectures proposed in this vein such as those around the role of legal services in meeting the needs of business.

In terms of relationships, Alderman Jones stated that he was keen to embed his own legal networks into his plans such that subsequent Sheriffs may also utilise these if desired.

It was highlighted that the Old Bailey lunches would continue with mixed and target sector lunches as well as themed lunches included.

Alderman Jones referenced an Old Bailey 'City Side' webpage where content would include available text of lectures and podcasts, as well as introductory short films of the roles of Sheriff, Recorder, Common Sergeant, Judges and the Old Bailey. The aim was that guests to the Old Bailey would be given QR cards with links to the interviews. Alderman Jones made specific reference to a recent podcast from Joshua Rozenberg – 'A Lawyer Talks' which contained interviews with both him and the Honorary Secondary describing the role of Sheriff and why they took up residence in the Old Bailey during their Shrieval year entitled 'Living Above the Cells'.

Alderman Jones also referenced the Shrieval Advisory Group that he had established and who would be tasked with ensuring that the Plan and work to deliver it was well aligned to the objective of promoting financial and professional services as well as provide informal advice and relevant contacts. He added that he was keen to ensure that the wider Court of Aldermen were also engaged with the Shrieval Plan and its delivery, particularly those below the Chair around convening Old Bailey lunches for example.

In terms of charitable work, Alderman Jones mentioned the Sheriffs' Ball and the Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund and planned initiatives here.

An Alderman stated that he had shared the link to the Joshua Rozenberg podcast mentioned with all and commented that it was an exceptionally good piece in terms of showcasing the role of Sheriff. He also commended the alignment of the Plan with the Mayoralty was important and was to be welcomed.

Another Alderman also asked that the Plan consider the introduction of the new Court of Common Council given that all-out elections were scheduled for March 2025.

The Committee indicated that it was broadly supportive of the plan presented.

**RESOLVED** – The Committee received the Shrieval Pan 2024/25.

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

There were no questions.

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 16 July 2024.

**RESOLVED:** - That the non-public minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 16 July 2024 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

10. **REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk This report advising Members of action taken by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of the Court of Aldermen, in accordance with Standing Order No. 46 (Court of Aldermen).

11. **ALDERMANIC AWAYDAY REFLECTIONS**

The Committee took the opportunity to reflect further upon the Aldermanic Awayday that had taken place last week, particularly the key objectives established for each of the three Strategic Working Groups for 2024-25.

12. **ALDERMANIC STRATEGY GROUP THREE UPDATE**

Aldermanic Strategy Group Three updated the Committee on progress on the 'Court of Aldermen 2024' document.

13. **KEY COMMITTEE ISSUES**

Aldermen were given the opportunity to report on recent, wider Committee issues of strategic importance.

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

There were no questions raised in the non-public session.

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

There were 5 items of other business for discussion in non-public session.

16. **STAFFING MATTERS**

The Executive Director, Private Secretary to Lord Mayor provided a verbal update on staffing matters.

**The meeting ended at 12.21 pm**

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Chairman

**Contact Officer: Gemma Stokley  
gemma.stokley@cityoflondon.gov.uk**

<b>Committee(s):</b> General Purposes Committee of Aldermen Policy and Resources Committee	<b>Date:</b> 15 October 2024 17 October 2024
<b>Subject:</b> Act of Common Council – Annual Election of Ward Beadles	<b>Public</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>£N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk and Chief Executive, Comptroller and City Solicitor, Remembrancer	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Gemma Stokley, Principal Governance and Member Services Manager	

## Summary

At the September 2023 meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen, queries were raised in relation to the role of Ward Beadles and the mechanisms related with their appointment.

A report thereon was subsequently considered by the General Purposes Committee in March 2024. One of the resolutions passed was the bringing forward of changes to relevant Acts of Common Council in order to address issues arising from the existing overlap of Aldermanic and Beadle terms of office, which had arisen following the relatively recent change from annual to four-year terms for Beadles

This report seeks to progress that specific request and sets out the terms of a draft Bill for submission to the Court of Common Council to achieve this. The effect of the Bill would be to return to the long-standing practice of Ward Beadles being elected on an annual cycle once again, in order to address some of the unanticipated practical concerns that have materialised since the change.

As the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen have no direct reporting mechanism to the Court of Common Council, it is proposed that the draft Bill be presented by your Policy and Resources Committee (that Committee having the relevant remit from the Court of Common Council) in line with previous, similar, Acts of Common Council such as that concerning Aldermanic Qualifications, passed in 2023.

## Recommendation(s)

- 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.

- That the **Policy and Resources Committee** recommend to the Court of Common Council the passing of an Act of Common Council in the form set out in Appendix 1.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. At its meeting on 19 March 2024, the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen considered a report in relation to the roles of Ward Beadles and Honorary Ward Clerks and how these might both be better regularised going forward. One of the specific resolutions arising from this meeting was that Officers be instructed to seek an Act of Common Council to revert to the annual election of Ward Beadles in order to provide the opportunity to address various issues arising from the overlap of Aldermanic and Beadle terms of office that exists at present.
2. The role of Ward Beadle is one of the oldest elected offices in the City, with references to them found at least as early as the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. These show that their duties in the Middle Ages included the maintenance of public order, in which they worked with the constable and the watch, and the safeguarding of public morality. The role has consistently been closely connected to that of the Ward Alderman, supporting them in the discharge of their duties. The Ward at this date was practically a self-contained unit for many purposes and possessed its own officers, for whom it was responsible for the remuneration thereof. The Ward Beadles were elected by the Wardmotes and their names, with those of the Common Councillors and other officers, were sent in annually in the Ward presentments.
3. An Act of Common Council for the Election of Beadles was passed on 10 October 1663 and has subsequently been amended several times. This speaks of the Beadle as 'an ancient Office in every Ward of the City, and very useful to the Alderman for the Common Business and Affairs of the Ward...' It goes on to refer to recent elections of 'very unfit Persons' and to remedy the situation ordains that the Alderman, with the consent of the Deputy and the Common Councilmen or the major part of them, should nominate 'one or more honest, sufficient and discreet person or persons' for election at the wardmote.
4. In a report to the Special Sub Police Committee in 1947 the (Acting) Comptroller and City Solicitor and the Deputy Keeper of the Records advised that the City Corporation had never regulated the duties of the Ward Beadles and had no power to do so, the Beadles being responsible primarily to their Aldermen and the ward electors. A list of duties had been compiled in 1841 but it was emphasised that these were not duties fixed by the City Corporation but were 'a list of what appear to be more particularly the duties of that officer'.
5. When the Town Clerk wrote to a Ward Clerk on the subject in 1964, he emphasised that the Beadles were responsible primarily to their Aldermen and the Ward electors - 'It is generally assumed that while certain duties are obligatory, there are many others that cannot be specified in exact terms, some being of a domestic nature which spring from a spirit of co-operation between the Ward Officers'.



6. Beadles were previously expected to attend all meetings of the Court of Aldermen, as well as various other occasions. Today, attendance is broadly restricted to Wardmotes, Common Hall, the Admission ceremonies for the Sheriffs and Lord Mayor, the Lord Mayor's Show, and various church services.

### **Current Position**

7. From the above, it is evident that Ward Beadles are elected officers of the Ward, not employees nor appointments of the Corporation or of the Alderman (albeit, intrinsically linked particularly with the latter). As previously explained, the elections of Ward Beadles are governed by Acts of Common Council, most recently through the Act of 17 January 2013.
8. Equally, it is clear that, whilst there is no formal role description, there is a set of understood roles and functions which have evolved over time. Historic aspects relating to electoral functions now rest now with the Town Clerk as Ward Clerk, through the Electoral Services office; the function is, therefore, now essentially limited to opening and closing the Wardmote, and attending on the Alderman at such ceremonial occasions as may be required.
9. The role being a ceremonial one, a connection and effective working relationship between the Alderman and Beadle is highly desirable. This is reinforced not only by the historic nature of the role, but particularly through the electoral arrangements: it is the Alderman, and only the Alderman, who may nominate candidates for election as Beadle. Thus, whilst the role is technically elected, it is in essence more akin to an appointment than might, on face value, be appreciated.
10. Until 2005, elections for Beadles were undertaken annually at Wardmotes, commensurate with arrangements for electing Common Councillors. Following change to the latter, the position was also changed for Ward Beadles by way of Act of Common Council, and elections are now for four-year terms. This can and has, however, led to occasions of some disconnect between individual Beadles and Aldermen, particularly where the incumbent of the latter office changes.
11. As Aldermanic elections are on a six-year cycle, with the added consideration of retirement at age 75, it can now be the case that there is a prolonged period for which a new Alderman is supported by a Beadle whom they have not personally nominated. This has raised the complementary query of how an Alderman is able to exercise oversight over the role, in keeping with the aforementioned exercise by the Court in this area in centuries past.
12. For the sake of clarity, the choice as to the appointment of a casual replacement, should it be required, rests solely with the Alderman (as provided by the Act of Common Council of 17 January 2013).

### **Proposal**

13. A reversion to the prior arrangements whereby Beadles were elected annually is proposed, as it would provide greater discretion to achieve change more expeditiously if required where, for instance, there is a change of Alderman or there are concerns over the conduct of an incumbent Beadle. It would also bring the role back into alignment with the other Ward Officer role, that of the Honorary Ward Clerk, which is appointed annually.
14. The proposal requires a new Bill for an Act of Common Council (Appendix 1) to amend section 1 of the Act of Common Council of 17 January 2013 (Appendix 2). In consultation with the Remembrancer, the Comptroller and City Solicitor has taken the opportunity in the latest Bill to update and simplify some of the more dated terminology used in previous Acts of Common Council.
15. If Members wish to take the Bill forward then, in accordance with Standing Order 46, it will be submitted to the Recorder of London for settling. It is anticipated that the Bill will then be read a first and second time at the Court of Common Council on 5 December 2024, and read a third time and made an Act of Common Council at the following meeting on 9 January 2025, so that the new arrangements are in force in time for the elections in March 2025.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

- Strategic implications – Given the ceremonial nature of these roles, the strategic implications are somewhat limited; nevertheless, the enhancing of a pool of candidates with greater mutual understanding of the rules and requirements of the roles will assist Aldermen in discharging their electoral and Ward duties.
- Financial implications – None.
- Resource implications – None.
- Legal implications – The regulation of the election of Ward Beadles is governed by Act of Common Council and is a matter for the City Corporation to determine.
- Risk implications – The risks associated with this proposal are relatively low, given that it simply seeks to revert to the previous, long-standing arrangement. Failure to react to the perceived current issues may, however, lead to a risk of continued lack of clarity and inconsistency in delivery.
- Equalities implications – There are no significant equalities implications associated with this proposal. Whilst it would allow an Alderman to nominate a person of their choosing to serve as Ward Beadle on a more regular basis, any nominees will continue to require the consent of the Deputy and Common Councilmen for the Ward (or a majority of them) and will need to be elected at the Wardmote. Associated plans to develop a pool of interested individuals, who can be identified in accordance with the City's equal opportunities recruitment policies and who can be provided with the relevant training in preparation for any future role, will provide Aldermen with a more diverse pool of trained individuals to draw on, should they find it helpful.
- Climate implications – none.

- Security implications – none.

### **Conclusion & Recommendations**

16. The position of Ward Beadle is an important ceremonial office tied to the delivery of Ward business and, in particular, the support of the Alderman. Changes to the electoral procedure for Ward Beadles, to see these return to an annual cycle, is considered advantageous. This would need to be achieved by an Act of Common Council and a draft Bill is therefore appended here for your approval for submission to the Court of Common Council.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Draft Bill for an Act of Common Council

Appendix 2 – Act of Common Council of 17 January 2013

### **Background Papers**

None

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**To be considered at the Court of Common Council**

**2024**

**A BILL**

For an Act of Common Council to –

Revert to the annual election of Ward Beadles.

**WHEREAS:-**

- (1) From time immemorial there has existed and still exists in the City of London (“the City”) a Common Council consisting of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons in Common Council assembled (“the Common Council”) which has made such Acts, Ordinances, Rules, Orders and Regulations for the regulation and good government of the City and its Liberties as it has from time to time found necessary and expedient;
- (2) From at least 1663, until 2005, Common Councilmen and Ward Beadles were elected annually at the same Wardmotes, and on several occasions Acts of Common Council were passed to ensure that the dates of those elections continued to take place on the same dates;
- (3) With effect from 2005, Common Councilmen were elected every four years, and further Acts of Common Council were passed to ensure that the elections of Common Councilmen and Ward Beadles continued to coincide;
- (4) By an Act of Common Council of 17 January 2013 it was enacted that elections of Ward Beadles would take place on the same date as ordinary ward elections in relation to the whole number of Common Councilmen, as determined in accordance with the provisions of the Act of Common Council of 13 September 2012 or any other Act of Common Council from time to time amending or replacing it;
- (5) It is expedient that elections of Ward Beadles should revert to an annual cycle, so that there is a more frequent opportunity for the Alderman of each Ward to put forward one or more candidates of their choice for nomination;
- (6) His late Majesty King Edward the Third by his Charter made and granted to the City in the fifteenth year of his reign afterwards confirmed and ratified by Parliament did (amongst other things) grant that if any existing customs in the City were in any part hard or defective or any things in the City newly arising in which no remedy had been ordained should need amendment the Mayor and Aldermen of the City and their successors with the assent of the Commonalty of the City might ordain fit remedy as often as it should seem expedient to them so that such ordinance should be profitable to the King and to the citizens and to all other liege subjects resorting to the City and agreeable also to reason and good faith.

**IT IS THEREFORE ENACTED** by the Common Council **AS FOLLOWS:**

**Elections of Ward Beadles**

1. For section 1 of the Act of Common Council of 17 January 2013 substitute –

“1. (1) Subject to subsection (2), elections of Ward Beadles shall take place at the annual Wardmotes in March, on a date to be determined by each Alderman in respect of their own Ward.

(2) In any year in which ordinary ward elections in relation to the whole number of Common Councilmen are scheduled to take place, as determined in accordance with the provisions of the Act of Common Council made and passed on the 13th day of September 2012 or any other Act of Common Council from time to time amending or replacing it, elections of Ward Beadles shall take place on the same date as those ordinary ward elections.”

**Commencement**

2. The provisions of this Act will come into force on the day on which it is made and passed as an Act of Common Council.

**GIFFORD, Mayor**



**A Court of Common Council holden in the Guildhall of the City of London on Thursday, the seventeenth day of January, 2013.**

**Act of Common Council to:-**

Change the date of the elections of Ward Beadles;

Make incidental and consequential changes to the term of office of Ward Beadles;

Provide that any casual vacancy occurring in the office of Ward Beadle shall be filled by the Alderman of the ward in which the vacancy occurs;

Repeal the Act of Common Council made and passed on the 4th day of December 2003.

**WHEREAS:-**

- (1) From time immemorial there has existed and still exists in the City of London (“the City”) a Common Council consisting of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons in Common Council assembled and the Common Council have made, passed, ordained and established divers Acts, Ordinances, Rules, Orders and Regulations for the regulation and good government of the City and its Liberties as to them from time to time has been found necessary and expedient;
- (2) By an Act of Common Council made and passed on the 4th day of December 2003 it was enacted that as from the coming into force of that Act the elections of Ward Beadles shall take place on the second Friday of March in every fourth year after 2005, which at that time coincided with the date of ordinary ward elections in relation to the whole number of Common Councilmen;
- (3) By an Act of Common Council made and passed on the 13th day of September 2012 it was enacted that ordinary ward elections in relation to the whole number of Common Councilmen shall take place on a date to be determined in accordance with the provisions of that Act;
- (4) It is desirable that the elections of Ward Beadles should continue to take place on the same date as ordinary ward elections in relation to the whole number of Common Councilmen;
- (5) It is desirable to make certain incidental and consequential changes to the term of office of Ward Beadles;

- (6) It is also desirable that the Aldermen of the several wards in the City should continue to be authorised to fill by appointment any casual vacancies occurring in the office of Ward Beadle in their respective wards;
- (7) His late Majesty King Edward the Third by his Charter made and granted to the City in the fifteenth year of his reign afterwards confirmed and ratified by Parliament did (amongst other things) grant that if any customs in the City before that time obtained and used were in any part hard or defective or any things in the City newly arising in which no remedy had been ordained should need amendment the Mayor and Aldermen of the City and their successors with the assent of the Commonalty of the City might put and ordain thereto fit remedy as often as it should seem expedient to them so that such ordinance should be profitable to the King and to the citizens and to all other liege subjects resorting to the City and agreeable also to reason and good faith.

**BE IT THEREFORE and IT IS HEREBY ENACTED ORDAINED AND ESTABLISHED** by the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, the Right Worshipful the Aldermen and the Commons of the City of London in Common Council assembled and the authority of the same **AS FOLLOWS:**

#### **Elections of Ward Beadles**

1. Elections of Ward Beadles shall take place on the same date as ordinary ward elections in relation to the whole number of Common Councilmen, as determined in accordance with the provisions of the Act of Common Council made and passed on the 13th day of September 2012 or any other Act of Common Council from time to time amending or replacing the same.

#### **Term of office of Ward Beadles**

2. (1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3) any Ward Beadle shall, unless he resigns his office or it otherwise becomes vacant, cease to hold office on the election of his successor, who shall hold office from that point.  
  
(2) The Alderman of the Ward may instead direct that a Ward Beadle shall cease to hold office at some later point in the Wardmote at which his successor is elected, or on the closing of the said Wardmote, in which case his successor shall hold office from that later point.  
  
(3) If no successor to a Ward Beadle is elected at a Wardmote held in accordance with section 1, that Ward Beadle shall cease to hold office on the closing of the said Wardmote.

#### **Casual vacancies in the office of Ward Beadle**

3. On a casual vacancy occurring in the office of Ward Beadle, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the Alderman of the Ward in which the vacancy has occurred.



**Repeal**

4. The Act of Common Council made and passed on the 4th day of December 2003 is hereby repealed (except in relation to its repeal of certain provisions of Acts of Common Council made and passed on the 14th day of June 1984 and the 10th day of October 2002 respectively).

**Commencement**

5. The provisions of this Act shall come into force on the day on which it is made and passed as an Act of Common Council.

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