

MEMBERS PRIVILEGES SUB (POLICY AND RESOURCES) COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 18 February 2020

Minutes of the meeting of the Members Privileges Sub (Policy and Resources)
Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday,
18 February 2020 at 10.00 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Tom Hoffman (Chief Commoner) (Chairman)

Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark

Deputy Edward Lord

Deputy Catherine McGuinness

Jeremy Simons

Tom Sleigh

Officers:

Dorian Price

- Assistant Director, Guildhall Manager

Peter Ochser

- Guildhall Complex Buildings and
Hospitality Manager

Chris Rumbles, Clerk

- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Christopher Hayward, Ann Holmes, Richard Regan and Brian Mooney.

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THIS MEETING

A Member questioned whether it would be appropriate for the Chief Commoner to remain in the Chair for item 3 given it related to the Chief Commoner's flat. Following discussion, it was agreed that any proposed changes would be for the benefit of the incoming Chief Commoner and that, as such, it would be appropriate for the Chief Commoner to remain in the Chair for this item.

3. MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting on 3 June 2019 were approved as an accurate record.

4. ANNUAL REFURBISHMENT AND REPLENISHMENT OF CHIEF COMMONER'S FLAT

The Sub-committee considered a report of the City Surveyor setting out the scope, frequency, specifications and renewal of items to be considered as part of an annual refurbishment of the Chief Commoner's flat.

The Guildhall Complex Buildings and Hospitality Manager explained the intention being to establish a framework and budget position in relation to refurbishment of both the Chief Commoner's and Chair of Policy's flats. The framework would provide a structure for purchasing items and allow for these to be bought at the right time and to an appropriate standard.

A Member, also Chairman of Corporate Asset Sub-committee, explained how the Cyclical Works Programme addressed maintenance issues on a priority basis and against a framework of agreed criteria. Concern was raised regarding certain elements in the Chief Commoner's Flat e.g. sofa being renewed after only one year of use.

Members agreed that, unless there were exceptional circumstances, all items should be included within the Cyclical Works Programme and replaced on a priority basis against approved criteria. A Member, also Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, suggested refurbishment of the Chair's flat could be undertaken in line with the term of office for this post.

It was accepted that both flats would benefit from an annual light refresh of circa £1k and it was agreed these works could be undertaken through provision in the City Surveyor's local risk budget.

RESOLVED, that it be recommended to the Policy and Resources Committee that refurbishment and renewal of items in the Chief Commoner's and Chair of Policy's flats form part of the Cyclical Works Programme going forward and; that an annual light touch refresh take place to a value of circa £1k and with this being funded through the City Surveyor's local risk budget.

5. PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION FOR CHAIRMEN AND DEPUTY CHAIRMEN

The Sub-committee considered a report of the Town Clerk regarding provision of dedicated office space within Guildhall for the position of Chairman of Finance and seeking views on how provision of accommodation was working more widely.

Members agreed that it was not the right time to begin looking at provision of dedicated office space for Chairmen given the City Corporation was in the midst of a Governance Review and the future committee structure was unknown at this time. It was proposed awaiting the outcome of the Governance Review to understand the future committee structure and taking a holistic view at this point of any Chairmen that would benefit from dedicated office space.

RESOLVED, that any review of dedicated office space for Chairmen be delayed until the conclusion of the Governance Review.

6. MEMBER ACCOMMODATION

The Sub-committee considered a report of the Town Clerk seeking views on whether to extend the approved list of users of the Member accommodation to include additional City of London Police colleagues in support of them during

their operational duties. The Town Clerk explained that a Member had proposed the Sub-committee consider this issue.

A Member referred to their regular use of the Member accommodation and suggested it was very rare to find a situation where accommodation was not available, noting that Members were always given priority to the bedrooms. It was suggested that the statistics on use of the bedrooms were surprising; it was thought a key period of usage was Monday-Thursday and that this period would show a much higher usage rate.

A Member referred to the City of London Police having previously had a fully equipped section house at Bernard Morgan House and having declared this surplus to requirements as part of the Police Accommodation Strategy. As such, it was not thought necessary to extend usage of the Member accommodation to additional City of London Police staff.

It was suggested that guidance on use of the bedrooms along with remuneration and other benefits for Members be looked as part of the governance review.

A Member referred to the list of those entitled to use the bedrooms and suggested this needed reviewing given the optic of the City Corporation providing subsidised accommodation. The Member suggested that Masters of Livery Companies, Clerks of Livery Companies and Immediate Past Masters of Livery Companies be removed from the list of preferred users, but Members agreed that statistics on these types of bookings should be sourced and considered before any decision was taken. It was agreed that this information would be circulated before the next meeting.

A Member, also Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, suggested a hotel style card system could be introduced for the bedrooms requesting a change of sheets in the bedrooms rather than changing these on a daily basis.

RESOLVED, that City of London Police usage of the Member Accommodation would continue under the current arrangement and; that a breakdown on other users of the accommodation would be provided to the Sub-committee.

7. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

There were no questions

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no additional items of business.

9. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Item No.	Paragraph No.
10-12	3

10. MINUTES

The non-public minutes of the meeting on 3 June 2019 were approved as an accurate record.

Matters arising

Representatives at City Events

A Member referred to guest lists for events and information on guests being circulated to Members in advance of each event and it was agreed that a resolution would be passed to Hospitality Working Party requesting this be arranged.

The Town Clerk referred to oversight of City Hospitality being the responsibility of the Hospitality Working Party and confirmed a report was being prepared for the next meeting setting out the current arrangements and presenting options going forward.

Members were in agreement that it would be good to review the guidance for Committee dinners to see if this needed adapting in any way.

A Member, also Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, suggested this was an issue that could be raised as part of her regular informal meetings with Chairmen.

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

There were no non-public questions.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

Aldermanic Meetings

A Member noted from the recent Informal Court of Common Council meeting that minutes relating to Aldermanic meetings were not generally available to Members and it was proposed this Committee formally ask for sight of these.

A Member, also Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, acknowledged the Aldermanic meetings were technically different to other City Corporation committees and it was proposed asking for sight of the minutes rather than putting in a formal request from this Sub-committee.

Dogs in the workplace

A Member referred to organisations in the City allowing dogs to be brought into the workplace. It was highlighted that a significant number of Members were dog owners and it was questioned whether some form of provision of an on-site

facility could be arranged by the City Corporation to allow for dogs to be brought onto the premises.

A Member, also Chairman of Establishment Committee, acknowledged that this issue would impact staff as well as Members, and agreed that a report be produced looking at best practice in the marketplace and highlighting issues of bringing pets into the workplace.

Private telephone calls

A Member, also Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, referred to the number of staff seen in corridors making private telephone calls. It was questioned whether PODs could be located on the premises to allow staff a private space to make these calls. A Member, also Chair of Establishment Committee, acknowledged the issue and suggested this would be looked at as part of the ongoing work looking at agile working.

Arrangements at Committee Dinners

The Chairman referred to an issue that had been raised regarding arrangements for Committee dinners and whether these should be in honour of retiring Chairmen.

The Town Clerk reminded Members of this Sub-committee's terms of reference, with it having responsibility for Members' privileges other than those relating to City Hospitality which was dealt with by Hospitality Working Party. Members noted that a report was being prepared for Hospitality Working Party to consider current arrangements and also looking at options for committee dinners going forward.

It was questioned whether committee dinners were intended to be in honour of individuals or whether they were about the work of the Committee. Members agreed that it would be good for the guidance to be reviewed to understand if it required adapting in any way.

A Member, also Chair of Policy Resources Committee, suggested she could raise this issue as part of her regular informal meetings with Committee Chairmen.

The meeting ended at 10.43am

Chairman

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