

Committee(s) Privileges Committee of Aldermen Court of Aldermen	Date(s): <i>To be reported to the Privileges Committee of Aldermen on a date TBC</i>
Subject: Report of Action Taken: Shrievalty and Mayoralty in 2020/21 – 16 April 2020	Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Information
Report author: Lorraine Brook, Town Clerk's Department	

Summary

This report advises Members of action taken by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Privileges Committee of Aldermen and the Chairman of the Court of Aldermen, in accordance with the Court of Aldermen's Standing Order No. 36.

Recommendation:- That Members note the decision taken in accordance with the Court of Aldermen's Standing Order No.36 in respect of the Shrievalty and Mayoralty in 2020/21.

Main Report

The Shrievalty and Mayoralty in 2020/21

Background

- (i) In light of COVID-19 and the arising lock-down within the UK, as of 26 March 2020, the Court of Aldermen has held weekly informal virtual meetings to consider City Corporation matters and Aldermanic specific issues. At its informal meeting on 9 April 2020, Members considered the implications for the annual election of Sheriffs on 24 June 2020; and more generally, the position in respect of the Shrievalty and Mayoralty beyond September and November 2020.
- (ii) The Election of Sheriffs for 2020/21 was due to take place on 24 June 2020 and the Election of the Lord Mayor was due to take place on 29 September 2020. Both elections would signify the end of Offices for Sheriffs Mainelli and Hayward, and Lord Mayor Russell.
- (iii) The regulations passed by the Government in response to the Covid-19 crisis prohibit gatherings of more than two people in public places; and additional regulations ban elections from being held before 6 May 2021.

Whilst the ban on elections does not directly apply to the City, the City has expressed its desire to comply and this will therefore have an impact on any elections and potential by-elections within the City.

- (iv) A detailed exploration by The City Remembrancer and the Comptroller and City Solicitor of these issues and the implications for the Election of Sheriffs and the Election of Lord Mayor, noting that different Acts and Charters apply to Common Hall, took place following the COVID-19 outbreak.
- (v) At an informal meeting of the Court of Aldermen held on 9 April 2020, Members agreed unanimously that, at this unprecedented time, the Court of Aldermen (led by the Lord Mayor in collaboration with the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee) should focus on the provision of leadership to the City and beyond; and it should seek to provide assurances about stability and continuity once the country moves into recovery. Consequently, Members were of the view that a change in the Shrieval and Mayoral Offices in 2020/21 would detract from the City's focus on responding to Covid-19.
- (vi) The Court of Aldermen was therefore minded to recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee that the current Sheriffs (Alderman Michael Mainelli and Christopher Hayward) and the current Lord Mayor (Alderman William Russell) continue to serve in those Offices for a further 12 months following what would normally be the expiry of their Offices in September 2020 and November 2020, following the relevant elections at Common Hall (June and September).
- (vii) Subject to the view of the Policy and Resources Committee, a recommendation thereon would need to be submitted to the Court of Common Council.

Reason for urgency

- (viii) As of 18 March 2020, all scheduled formal meetings of the Privileges Committee and the Court of Aldermen were cancelled in light of COVID-19, Consequently, formal approval by the Privileges Committee of Aldermen and the Court of Aldermen, of the recommendation set out in paragraph x, was sought in accordance with Standing Order No.36.
- (ix) Standing Order No. 36 states that: "Where in the opinion of the Town Clerk, urgent matters arise which require a decision before the next meeting of the relevant committee or the Court, the Town Clerk shall refer the matter to the relevant Chairman, or in his/her absence the Deputy Chairman or in the Deputy Chairman's absence the Senior Alderman, who shall decide whether it is necessary to call a special meeting or, alternatively, to authorise the officers to act."

Action taken

- (x) In accordance with Standing Order No.36, on 16 April 2020 the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Privileges Committee of Aldermen and the Chairman of the Court of Aldermen, approved the following:-

That –

- (a) the serving Sheriffs (Alderman Michael Mainelli and Christopher Hayward) and the serving Lord Mayor (Alderman William Russell) for 2019/20 continue in those Offices for a further twelve months with their terms of Office rolled over or extended until September and November 2021 respectively, with the appropriate provisions being made or enacted to facilitate this; and
- (a) subject to approval by and recommendation from the Policy and Resources Committee, the Court of Common Council be asked to resolve, as a matter of urgency, that the date of the Election of Sheriffs on Midsummer Day in 2020 be moved to Midsummer Day in 2021.

Conclusion

- (xi) Members are asked to note the decision taken in accordance with the Court of Aldermen's Standing Order No.36 in respect of the Shrievalty and Mayoralty in 2020/21.

Contact

Lorraine Brook

Town Clerk's Department

E: lorraine.brook@cityoflondon.gov.uk

T: 020 7332 1409