

<b>Committee(s)</b> General Purposes Committee of Aldermen	<b>Date(s):</b> 11 May 2021
<b>Subject:</b> Report of Action Taken - Refreshed guidance for Liveries and Guilds	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>3, 8, 9, 10</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk and Chief Executive	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Lorraine Brook, Principal Committee and Member Services Manager, Town Clerk's Department	

### Summary

This report advises Members of action taken by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen and the Chairman of the Court of Aldermen, in accordance with Standing Order No. 46 (Court of Aldermen), relative to an extension to the waiver previously issued by the Court of Aldermen to enable Livery Companies and Guilds to conduct their business on a virtual basis.

### Recommendation:

- that Members note the report.

### Main Report

Ordinarily, the general expectation of the Court of Aldermen, as outlined in the guidance issued on the formation of new guilds or companies, would be that all Guild or Livery Company business should be conducted within the City boundaries. However, following the outbreak of Covid-19, given the Government's advice on social distancing and the introduction of periods of national lock-down as of March 2020, refreshed guidance for the Livery and Guilds regarding the conduct of company business, including court meetings and the binding of apprentices, was agreed by the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen and the Court of Aldermen in late March 2020. That guidance confirmed that Livery and Guild business could be conducted virtually and would be valid. On 28 April 2021, the Court of Aldermen reviewed the position in light of ongoing government restrictions and uncertainty as to when "normal" business may resume, and it agreed an extension to the waiver which was granted in March 2020.

## **Current position**

1. The matter was not reviewed by the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen in October but was, with the consent of the Town Clerk, considered under the Court of Aldermen's urgency procedures (Standing Order 42) in November on the basis that further clarification had been requested by the Livery about the Court of aldermen's expectations and the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen would not meet before 7 December 2021.

## **Decision taken**

2. It was agreed on 8 November 2021, by the Town Clerk following consultation with the Chairmen of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen and the Court of Aldermen, that the guidance currently in place in relation to the conduct of Guild and Livery Company business be extended until 31 March 2022. Such an extension will allow for the Livery's business to be managed effectively until this date and will provide some longer-term clarity for the Livery and the Guilds in respect of the Court of Aldermen's expectations.

3. The decision taken in accordance with Standing Order 46 is:-

That the Court of Aldermen resolves that the following guidance be issued to the clerks of Guilds and Livery companies who enquire about the conduct of their business during the current extraordinary circumstances:

- a) That, insofar as the Ordinances or By-Laws of any Company with Livery, Company without Livery or Guild contain restrictive or prescriptive provisions as to the location and timing of any meeting, election, installation or admission of any members or officers, the Court of Aldermen agrees to allow any reasonable variation to such provisions, to be determined by the Guild or Livery company concerned and to be valid until 31 March 2022.
  - b) That, these arrangements will allow for Livery meetings to take place virtually and for business to be conducted effectively until 31 March 2022 before which time the arrangements will be reviewed by the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen and the Court of Aldermen.
  - c) That, in particular, procedures adopted on the occasion of the binding of apprentices may be conducted virtually, subject to the requirement for the indentures to be entered within six months of the decision being taken in the Books of the Chamberlain of London.
4. The General Purposes Committee of Aldermen will review the decision in due course and consider the future position in respect of the conduct of Guild and Livery Company business, noting that more flexible ways of working are now bedded into most business practices.

## **Conclusion**

5. Members are asked to note the report of action taken.

\*Standing Order 46 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.”*

### **Background papers**

- *“Report of Action Taken - Refreshed guidance for Liveries and Guilds”*, General Purposes Committee of Aldermen on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021

### **Contact**

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