

## FREEDOM APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2021

# CONFIDENTIAL

By virtue of paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

### 10. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

The Committee considered the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2021.

#### **RESOLVED, that:**

the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

### 11. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LIST**

The Committee considered the Outstanding Actions List as follows:

- 1C: it was agreed that the Chair of Policy, Catherine McGuinness, and the Chairman, Jeremy Mayhew, would be the nominators for Guy Nicholson.
- 2C: it was noted that the Freedom ceremony for Tony Travers would take place on either Monday 6 December or Tuesday 8 December (Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court to keep the nominators informed).
- 3C: it was agreed that the Late Lord Mayor, Alderman Russell – provided that the current Lord Mayor were to agree that purdah be waived – would be the first nominator, with the Chair of the Education Board, Caroline Haines, being the second.
- 4C: the Chair of Policy was confirmed as being the first nominator. The Committee asked the Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court to identify the second nominator and to progress the nomination at pace.
- 5C: this action was noted as being complete.
- 6C: it was agreed that this action, whilst having been carried out, was ongoing.
- 7C: it was noted that this action would be addressed under item 16.

### 12. **CHAMBERLAIN'S COURT BUSINESS PLAN 2021/22**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain which set out the Business Plan for the Chamberlain's Court for 2021/22. Members' attention was drawn to the net cost of administering the Freedom, which was not met by the Freedom ceremonies fees and sales of merchandise. Whilst members were in agreement on the need for the Chamberlain's Court to match income to expenditure, the proposed increase in Freedom ceremonies fees (to £166) was queried, with members noting that the previous gap in income did not necessarily require this level of increase. The Chamberlain, in response, advised that the proposed amount was an initial figure for consideration only, with further work required to determine the correct amount.

There was further discussion of the economic rationale for any increase in fees and members were advised that the need for additional income was not intended also to compensate for officer time. A separate budget existed for the waiver of fees for Freedom by Special Nomination, whilst nominating departments were expected to provide the fee for Freedom by Invitation. In response to a further query from members, the Clerk to the Chamberlain's Court confirmed that if an individual were to be included in the Ward lists or stand as a candidate for election, their fee would also be waived.

**RESOLVED, that:**

- i) the Committee note the factors taken into consideration in compiling the Chamberlain's Court Business Plan;
- ii) the Business Plan for the Chamberlain's Court for 2021-22 be agreed;
- iii) the Committee agree the Business Plan remain a non-public, rather than confidential, appendix to the Chamberlain's Business Plan covering report.

*Chair of Policy left the meeting at 5.04pm.*

**13. INCREASE IN CHARGES FOR FREEDOM CEREMONY**

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain which recommended an increase to the Freedom fee in order to cover the running costs of the Chamberlain's Court. Members noted that the substantive discussion for this item had taken place under item 12 (above) and reiterated that there should also be a commitment to ongoing efficiencies, as well as the fee increase, to assist in maintaining a balanced budget.

**RESOLVED, that:**

the Committee agree the increase of the Freedom fee from £100 to £140 and thereafter a modest annual increase according to the rate of inflation (RPI).

**14. PROPOSED MERGER OF TWO FREEDOM CATEGORIES**

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain which provided further information and clarification on the differences between the categories of Freedom by Invitation (FBI) and Freedom by Special Nomination (FSN). Officers provided additional information on the positive outcomes from merging the two categories, including better clarity in relation to the honour of an FSN, which was awarded in response to exceptional personal achievement with an appropriate level of hospitality being offered accordingly. Members weighed this information against other information presented, which included the loss of a dedicated budget for the FBIs were the two categories to be merged.

**RESOLVED, that:**

the Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court report back to the next meeting, scheduled for Thursday 10 February 2022, clearly laying out the implications for and against merging the categories of FBI and FSN.

**15. FREEDOMS DASHBOARD AND APPLICATIONS REQUIRING DISCUSSION**

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain and the Remembrancer which detailed nominations, including new nominations in paragraphs 4 and 5, as well as applications in progress. It was agreed that the Chair of Policy,

Catherine McGuinness, and Liveryman Jon Averbs would be the nominators for Barry Sheerman. In response to a question from a member as to whether Nickie Aiken (MP for the Cities of London and Westminster) had yet been nominated for the Freedom, the Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court advised that this invitation had not yet been extended. The Committee therefore agreed this nomination and asked that it be added to the dashboard.

The Chairman then raised a query in relation to the number of entries on the dashboard which included the update 'Formal invitation waiting to be sent'. The Remembrancer advised that there had been a short delay which was down to miscommunication between departments: this had since been resolved and the formal invitations had been sent.

**RESOLVED, that:**

- i) the Committee note the report and progress since the previous meeting of the Committee;
- ii) the Committee agree the proposed nominations of Michael Palin and Barry Sheerman;
- iii) the Committee agree the nomination of Nickie Aiken.

**16. LIST OF HEADS OF MISSIONS**

The Committee considered a report of the Remembrancer, which, at the Committee's prior request, had separated the appendix into two categories: European and non-European. Members welcomed this distinction, which had the benefit of providing added clarity between priority and secondary markets. Officers advised that the appendix would benefit from further input from the Department of Innovation and Growth.

**RESOLVED, that:**

the Town Clerk to invite the Director of Innovation and Growth to attend the next meeting, which was scheduled to take place on Thursday 10 February 2022.

**17. FREEDOMS BY SPECIAL NOMINATION – COMPOSITE LIST OF POTENTIAL RECIPIENTS**

The Committee considered a report of the Chamberlain and noted that all the individuals listed had either been progressed in terms of initial paperwork or allocated a date.

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

There were none.

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

There was none.

**The meeting ended at 6.01pm**

-----  
Chairman

**Contact Officer: Rhiannon Leary**  
**[rhiannon.leary@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:rhiannon.leary@cityoflondon.gov.uk)**