

Report – Policy and Resources Committee

Review of Standing Orders

To be presented on Thursday, 10th March 2022

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons
of the City of London in Common Council assembled.*

SUMMARY

In December 2021, the Court of Common Council determined new governance arrangements, arising from a comprehensive Governance Review undertaken by Robert Rodgers, The Lord Lisvane, and following extensive Member consultation as to the implementation of his various recommendations.

Arising from the changes approved, a series of consequential amendments to Standing Orders are now required, so as to give effect to the decisions made by the Court. Similarly, amendments have also been required due to changes relating to the introduction of the Bridge House Estates Board, as approved by the Court earlier in the Governance Review process. This report details these consequential amendments required.

The Governance Review process also highlighted a number of other areas where further consideration of specific Standing Orders would be beneficial. Whilst these are less time-critical (i.e., changes are not required immediately to give effect to the implementation of the new post-Governance Review arrangements), your Policy & Resources Committee has deemed it both timely and appropriate to provide an initial opportunity to contemplate all items in the round. The various items are, therefore, also presented for Members' consideration.

Finally, it should be noted that the ongoing reviews of the Project Procedure, Procurement Strategy and other documents in keeping with the outcomes of the Governance Review may lead to further consequential changes being required in due course. It is intended that the incorporation of these amendments would also provide an opportunity for a further housekeeping exercise to improve the presentational arrangements of the document.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members:

1. consider the proposed amendments to Standing Orders set out in this report, detailed in tables 1, 2 and 3.
2. authorise the Town Clerk to make any such changes as are required following the Court's consideration, so as to facilitate their implementation.

MAIN REPORT

Background

1. In September 2019, the Policy and Resources Committee proposed the undertaking of a comprehensive Governance Review of the City Corporation. Robert Rodgers, The Lord Lisvane, was appointed to conduct 'the Review'.
2. The Committee received the Review in September 2020 and determined that the many proposals should be studied in a structured way in the coming period, with Members afforded sufficient time to read and consider the content and implications. It was noted that the recommendations were far-reaching and wide-ranging and it would be for Members to consider how far they were appropriate and determine which should be taken forward. It was also agreed that it would be of the utmost importance to ensure that the process provided for all Members of the Court to continue to have the opportunity to input and comment on the Review. To that end, a series of informal Member engagement sessions were arranged to afford all Members opportunities to express their views on the various aspects of the Review.
3. Members considered the section of the Review concerning the Standards Regime (Section 8) first, resulting in the Court ultimately agreeing to a new set of arrangements in January 2021 and an Independent Panel being appointed. Similarly, the Court came to conclusions in respect of the Competitiveness agenda (Section 5) and, separately, Bridge House Estates, earlier in the process, before considering the wider committee structure and general principles for the operation of processes in December 2021.
4. As a consequence of those decisions, various amendments are required to be made to Standing Orders, in order to give effect to the decisions reached by the Court and to allow for their implementation in the new municipal year. These are set out in this report and marked up in Appendix 1 for approval.
5. In addition, a series of separate observations were made both by Lord Lisvane and by various Members throughout the Review process in respect of Standing Orders. In the interests of completeness, they are also set out in this report for Members' consideration.
6. Subject to the Court's views, the Standing Orders will be updated for implementation in the new municipal year. Authority is, therefore, also sought for the Town Clerk to make any such changes as may be required to give effect to the decisions taken by the Court this day.
7. In due course, further adjustments are likely to be required as a consequence of related reviews concerning certain thresholds and it is considered that this will also provide a helpful opportunity to take additional time to modernise the presentational aspects of Standing Orders.
8. Moving forwards, Standing Orders shall also be the subject (together with the Scheme of Delegations) of more regular, annual review, as it is important for the

Corporation to take a more agile and responsive approach to its governance arrangements (as opposed to waiting for larger, set-piece periodic reviews).

Summary of Changes

9. While the consequential amendments referred to are marked in the appended Standing Orders document (Appendix 1), for ease of reference and comprehension the table below provides a list summarising all changes made. This list also provides the accompanying rationale for any change, or highlights where specific consideration on an option is required.
10. As Members will note, some changes simply give effect to the decisions already taken by the Court in establishing the Bridge House Estates Board and through the Governance Review, while others are points of clarification or corrections of typographical and formatting errors. These are presented in the first summary table (Table 1) set out below and are also reflected in Appendix 1. Members are asked to endorse the changes made as giving effect to the Court's previous decisions.
11. In addition, there are a number of areas which were raised through debate over the period and which require specific, wider consideration; for instance, whether Members would wish to pursue changes to items such as the procedures concerning the conduct of debate at Court meetings.
12. Your Policy & Resources Committee has given consideration to these items and, where it believes that changes would be sensible and in the interests of the running of the Court, has made various proposals. The views of your Policy & Resources Committee, and their recommendations thereon, are set out in Table 2 below (*NB – these are not incorporated within Appendix 1*).
13. In addition, there is a third table (Table 3) where your Policy & Resources Committee, having considered the specific items, noted that they were the source of some contention and did not come to a specific determination or recommendation. Instead, it resolved to open the questions to the wider Court for consideration. These are set out accordingly.
14. The Court's determinations are sought in respect of the various items, together with such authority to the Town Clerk as may be required to allow for the Court's decisions to be reflected in the final Standing Orders document.

TABLE 1: Items relating to typographical errors, clarification of existing practice, previously agreed Governance Review recommendations, and Bridge House Estates Governance Arrangements (NB – these changes are reflected in Appendix 1, which has been marked up for further ease of reference).

Standing Order No.	Summary of Change / Rationale	Reason for Revision / Consideration
1(3)(e) (Application and Interpretation)	Following recent changes in the Town Clerk’s Departmental structure: where there are references to the “Town Clerk”, the <i>Deputy Town Clerk</i> and only <i>one</i> Assistant Town Clerk will be authorised to act in the absence of the Town Clerk, or where there is a vacancy in the office of Town Clerk.	Clarification / correction
3(2)(a) (Adjustments – Financial Limits)	The SO currently empowers the Town Clerk and Chamberlain to make changes in keeping with changes to the value of money. In practice, this has not been done in some time; therefore, mandating it as part of the annual review process will mitigate against the risk of thresholds falling out of kilter as years pass and is recommended.	Governance Review outcome
4 (Access to Meetings – non-Local/Police Authority Business)	An adjustment to reflect the Court’s decision to disapply the practice of inappropriately treating its non-local authority business under the provisions of local government legislation.	Governance Review outcome
10 (Ballots – open and recorded)	Lord Lisvane proposed that provision should be made for ballots for appointments to committees, outside bodies, etc. to be undertaken in an open and recorded manner, rather than by secret ballot (as is currently the case). P&R was not minded to support this change when considering it in June 2021 and again in February 2022, and so an amendment is <u>not</u> included in the revised Standing Orders (and the Governance Review outcome would be to make no change); however, the observation is listed here for completeness.	Governance Review outcome
12(7)(c) (Motions – Rescind / Revisit)	Formatting / numbering change for purposes of clarification and ease of reference.	Formatting

13(4) (Questions – Addressing the Court)	An amendment to provide for the Chairs of all sub-committees empowered to report directly to the Court (under SO9) to speak (for instance, the Property Investment Board, Capital Buildings Board, etc.).	Clarification, Governance Review outcome
17(2) (Minutes)	<p>This responds to a recent incident of confusion concerning the ability to raise points of discussion under the Minutes. It is not generally permissible under Local Government arrangements for Matters Arising to be raised under the Minutes in full Council meetings, neither is it in keeping with the traditional Local Government Standing Order for Minutes (nor the longstanding practice and intention of the Court’s existing Standing Order). A revision to incorporate the wording of the traditional local government standing order would be “No discussion shall take place upon the minutes, except upon their accuracy and any question of their accuracy shall be raised by motion”. This does not constitute a change in position, rather, simply a matter of clarification.</p> <p>In considering this matter, your Policy & Resources Committee was mindful that this does not prevent the ability to ask questions on Matters Arising from the Minutes entirely; rather, it is that the appropriate mechanisms (i.e., through submitting Motions or Questions in the usual way) should be used to do so.</p>	Clarification / correction
18(1) (Chief Commoner)	This is a clarification to make clear that Aldermen are not eligible to stand as Chief Commoner.	Clarification / correction
18(6)(b) (Chief Commoner – Civic Affairs Sub-Committee)	This reflects the creation of the new Civic Affairs Sub-Committee, approved through the Governance Review.	Governance Review outcome
21 (Appointment)	A tweak to the wording is suggested to help prevent issue where (as has happened previously) the particular timing of Easter has caused this meeting to fall at the beginning of May.	Clarification / correction

22(1) (Committee Appointments – Limit)	A decrease in the number of committees a Member can serve on, from eight to six, as determined by the Court in December 2021.	Governance Review outcome
22(3) (Committee Appointments – Exemptions)	Amendments are required as a consequence of the change at 22(1) and due to the changes / abolition of the Capital Buildings and Standards Appeal Committees respectively.	Governance Review outcome, Formatting
New Standing Order 'X'	The insertion of a new Standing Order, which reflects the protocol approved by the Court concerning the limit on the numbers of committees considering items, would be beneficial. Draft wording as agreed by your Policy & Resources Committee is set out in appendix 1.	Governance Review
27(1) (Sub-Committees)	Amendments are required to give effect to the decisions of the Court in December 2021 to provide greater control over the proliferation of sub-committees.	Governance Review outcome
27(2) (Sub-Committees – quorum)	Clarification to provide for local variations as required by specific circumstances	Clarification / correction
29(2) (Chairs – Term Limits)	A correction of “Police Committee” to the CoL Police Authority Board.	Clarification / correction
29(3)(a) (Chairs – Exemptions)	An update to the listed committees to reflect changes made through the Governance Review.	Governance Review outcome
29(7) (Chairs)	An update to the listed committees to reflect changes made through the Governance Review.	Governance Review outcome
30(various) (Deputy/Vice Chairs, Policy & Resources)	Various amendments to reflect the decision by the Court in December 2021 to revert to a single P&R Deputy Chair.	Governance Review outcome

30(3)(a) (Deputy Chair – outgoing Chair eligibility)	An amendment to give effect to the Court’s decision to remove the automatic right to serve; instead, the outgoing Chair shall be eligible for election as Deputy Chair in same way as other eligible Members.	Governance Review outcome
30(9) (Deputy Chair – ex-officios)	An update to the listed committees to reflect changes made through the Governance Review.	Governance Review outcome
29 & 30 (Chairs / Deputy Chairs – Election / Open Ballots)	As with SO10, Lord Lisvane proposed that the process for elections to these posts should cease to be by secret ballot. Members were not previously minded to support this change when considering it and so an amendment is not included here, but the consideration is listed here for completeness.	Governance Review outcome
31 (Ward Reception Committees)	A wording clarification to make clear the Court’s practice of referring state hospitality to WRCs, i.e., hospitality relating to a visiting Head of Government or State, or another senior guest of sovereign / dignitary.	Clarification / correction
31(6) (Ward Reception Committees)	This relates to a practice which is now defunct, so can be deleted.	Clarification / correction
32 (Access to Meetings)	An alteration consistent with that made in respect of SO4, to reflect the decision around the inappropriate application of local authority legislation.	Governance Review outcome
35(3) (Attendance)	Updated to reflect changes to the Standards regime / the abolition of the committee.	Governance Review outcome
37(1) (Conduct of Debate)	A small clarification to make clear that the reference includes reports.	Clarification / correction
41(b) (Delegated Authority)	An adjustment to reflect the Governance Review outcome that, other than where circumstances make it impracticable, the wider views of the committee membership shall be sought in seeking to progress delegated authority decisions.	Governance Review outcome

43(1) (Outside Bodies)	A typographical correction (replacing the word “shall” with “may”).	Clarification / correction
45 (various) (Access to documents)	Typographical updates (references to City of London Corporation)	Clarification / correction
48 (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Reference to Budgets within the Standing Order title	Clarification / correction
48(2) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Distinction on the budget approval process for BHE being within the gift of the BHE Board	BHE Review
48(3) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Distinctions drawn between the responsible Committee/Board for revenue estimates and capital budgets for City’s Fund, City’s Cash and Bridge House Estates	BHE Review
48(4) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Distinctions drawn between the necessary regulatory compliance of City Fund/City’s Cash and with the Bridge House Estates (and any other charity for which the City Corporation is the Trustee)	BHE Review
48(5) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Specifies the responsibility of the Chamberlain in respect of monitoring the City Fund and City’s Cash only, against the approved Prudential Indicators and reporting (via the Finance Committee) to the Court if they are to be breached.	BHE Review
48(6) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Full reference to the City of London Corporation	Clarification / Correction
48(7) (Resource Allocation, Revenue	Specifies and distinguishes the reporting lines for detailed revenue estimates of City Fund and City’s Cash (via the Spending Committee and Policy & Resources	BHE Review

Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Committee) and for Bridge House Estates, the relevant budgets, analysis of projected movements and proposed allocation of funding to the charity's primary and ancillary object (via the Bridge House Estates Board).	
48(8) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Articulates the required reporting from the Finance Committee and Bridge House Estates Board to the Court of Common Council in March of each year for the City Fund, City's Cash and Bridge House Estates.	BHE Review
48(9) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Full reference to the City of London Corporation	Clarification / Correction
48(9) and 48(10) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	A new paragraph inserted relating to the commitment to income without the approval of the Court of Common Council unless otherwise provided for in the Standing Orders, with detail distinguishing the process for City Fund/City's Cash and the Bridge House Estates.	BHE Review
48(10) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Clarification that similar principles to those outlined in 48(9), shall operate for income items. Where income is received outside the City Fund and City's Cash budget set for the relevant year, or outside the annual budget for a charity for which the City Corporation is charity trustee, the relevant Service Committee (for Bridge House Estates this is the Bridge House Estates Board) shall be required to authorize acceptance of those funds which must be in accordance with the strategies and plans set for each fund.	BHE Review
48(11) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Distinction drawn between process for City Fund/City's Cash and Bridge House Estates, requiring estimated financial estimates to be considered by the Finance Committee and Bridge House Estates Board (respectively) before proposals are submitted to the Court of Common Council.	BHE Review
48(11) (Resource Allocation, Revenue	Additional reference to authorisation under existing officer delegated authority added.	Clarification / correction

Estimates, Capital Budgets)		
48(12) (Resource Allocation, Revenue Estimates, Capital Budgets)	Full reference to the City of London Corporation	Clarification / correction
49(1) (Financial Regulations)	Full reference to the City of London Corporation	Clarification / Correction
50(1) (Project Management)	Provides exemption of the Standing Order for Bridge House Estates projects, where the relevant responsibilities lie with the Bridge House Estates Board unless otherwise reserved to the Court of Common Council	BHE Review
50(1)(a) (Project Management)*	Responsibility for the City Corporation's programme of projects has been transferred to the Operational Property and Projects Sub Committee, who will have oversight of Project Management. Correction has also been made to reflect that this Sub Committee will be a joint Sub Committee of Finance and Policy & Resources Committee.	Governance Review outcome
50(1)(b) (Project Management)*	Responsibility for the decisions surrounding projects has been updated to capture that the authority will lie with the new Operational Property and Projects Sub Committee and the Spending Committee. Correction has also been made to reflect that this Sub Committee will be a joint Sub Committee of Finance and Policy & Resources Committee	Governance Review outcome
50(3) (Project Management)*	The new Operational Property and Project Sub-Committee will have responsibility for the review of the City Corporation's Project Procedure.	Governance Review outcome
50(4) (Project Management)*	Addition of express provision for the Town Clerk to vary the Project Procedure for both City Fund/City's Cash and Bridge House Estates.	Clarification / Correction,

	Updated reference to the Operational Property and Project Sub-Committee (in place of Projects Sub-Committee) as the relevant body for the Town Clerk to consult with when considering varying the Projects Procedure in relation to individual projects.	Governance Review Outcome
50(4) (Project Management)	Protocol around the variation of the Project Procedure to be disapplied to schemes for refurbishment, redevelopment or reinstatement of up to £1.5mil per scheme/per property for investment properties – as provided for within the Scheme of Delegations to Officers.	Scheme of Delegations alignment
51(2) (Procurement and Contract Letting)	Adds provision for the consultation of the Bridge House Estates Board in advance of any changes to the Procurement Regulations that have an impact upon the charity.	BHE Review
51(2) (Procurement and Contract Letting)*	Updated reference to the body responsible for the review of Procurement Regulations from the Finance Committee to the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee, as per the approved Governance Review Court recommendations.	Governance Review outcome
52(1) (Writing-Off Debts)	Tidying up of wording / Full reference to the Court of Common Council	Clarification / Correction
52(1)(c) (Writing-Off Debts)	Specifies provision for the writing off of debts in excess of £10,000 for City Fund and City's Cash (via the Finance Committee) and for Bridge House Estates (via the Bridge House Estates Board)	BHE Review
52(1)(c) (Writing-Off Debts)	Threshold for approvals concerning the writing-off for bad debt increased to £500k for investment property and £100k for all other debt.	Scheme of Delegations alignment
52(2) Writing-Off Debts)	This update ensures that the Standing Orders are in accordance with the Scheme of Delegations to Officers in relation to the writing off of debt.	Scheme of Delegations alignment
53(Various) Corporate Plans and Strategies	Deletion of “corporate” from “corporate plans” reference.	Clarification / Correction

53(1)(a) Corporate Plans and Strategies	Provision made to ensure that City Fund/City's Cash Corporate Asset Management Plans be subject to annual review by the relevant Committee of Court, whilst the Bridge House Estates Board will perform this role for Bridge House Estates.	BHE Review
53(1)(a) Corporate Plans and Strategies*	Change in the regularity of the Corporate Asset Management Strategy review from annual to not less than every five years as per current practice. No longer to be reported to the Corporate Asset Sub-Committee (which ceases to exist) but to the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee Distinctions articulated between reporting arrangements for operational and investment properties in respect of any proposed property transactions that are not in accordance with the strategies referred to in SO 53(1)	Clarification / Correction, Governance Review outcome
53(1)(b) Corporate Plans and Strategies	Provision made to ensure that City Fund/City's Cash Investment Property Strategies be subject to annual review by the relevant Committee of Court, whilst the Bridge House Estates Board will perform this role for Bridge House Estates	BHE Review
53(4)(a) Corporate Plans and Strategies*	Change in approvals required for property transactions not in accordance with plans and strategies referred to in SO53(1) for investment and non-investment property to reflect the committees that will have oversight of those two portfolios (Property Investment Board and the Operational Property and Projects Sub Committee). Additional clarification about the Bridge House Estate Board's involvement for property within Bridge House Estates	Governance Review, BHE Review
54 (Capital Buildings)	Amendment to reflect new name and arrangements of the Capital Buildings Board	Governance Review
55(1) Acquisitions	Additional definitions added under acquisitions for Bridge House Estates "investment property assets" and "operational property assets"	BHE Review
55(2) Acquisitions	Full reference to the City of London Corporation	Clarification / Correction

55(2) Acquisitions	For Investment Property Assets - distinctions made for possible Total Acquisition Costs and the corresponding required approvals for the three separate funds: City Fund, City's Cash, and Bridge House Estates.	BHE Review
55(3) Acquisitions	For Operational Property Assets - distinctions made for possible Total Acquisition Costs and the corresponding required approvals for the three funds: City Fund, City's Cash, and Bridge House Estates.	BHE Review
55(3) Acquisitions*	Acquisitions of interest in operational property assets will need to be reported to the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee in place of the Finance Committee.	Governance Review outcome
56 (Identification of Surplus Property)	Clarification in Standing Order title now includes reference to Operational requirements as Property Assets that are considered surplus may be for both departmental or operational requirement.	Clarification / correction
56 (Identification of Surplus Property)*	As per the Governance Review outcome, the introduction of a mechanism to allow for the new Projects & Operational Sub-Committee to raise and progress discussion on assets which it believes are surplus.	Governance Review outcome
56(1) (Identification of Surplus Property)	Clarification that Committees are required to consider the effective and efficient use of operational property assets within their management and control.	Clarification / correction
56(1) (Identification of Surplus Property)	The effective and efficient use of operational property assets for Bridge House Estates property will be monitored by the Bridge House Estates Board.	BHE Review
56(1) (Identification of Surplus Property)*	As committees consider the effective and efficient use of an operational property asset within their management/control (for City's Cash), this will be monitored by the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee in place of the Corporate Asset Sub-Committee, which will no longer exist.	Governance Review
56(2)(a) (Identification of Surplus Property)	If a Bridge House Estates operational property is no longer required for use by the charity, a report must be made to the Bridge House Estates Board.	BHE Review

56.2.a (Identification of Surplus Property)	As committees consider whether an operational property asset within their management/control (for City Fund or City's Cash) is no longer required, a report on the circumstances will be made to the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee in place of the Corporate Asset Sub-Committee, which will no longer exist.	Governance Review
57(1) (Freehold disposals)	Disposals of freeholds subject to 2000 year leases and of former freehold highway land shall be approved by the Finance Committee if part of City Fund/City's Cash. For Bridge House Estates, this will be subject to the approval of the Bridge House Estates Board.	BHE Review
57(1) (Freehold disposals)*	Disposals of non-investment property freeholds subject to 2000 year leases (for City Fund and City's Cash) will be subject to approval by the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee in place of the Finance Committee.	Governance Review
57(2) (Freehold disposals)	For freehold disposals - distinctions made for anticipated receipt and the corresponding required approvals for the three funds: City Fund, City's Cash, and Bridge House Estates.	BHE Review
57(2) (Freehold disposals)	Updating the thresholds for committee approvals for the freehold disposals of City Fund/City's Cash non-investment property to reflect the changes to the Officer Scheme of Delegations (approved by Court in December 2021)	Scheme of Delegations alignment
57(2) (Freehold disposals)	Updating the reporting requirements for approval of the freehold disposals with an anticipated receipt of £5mil or above (for non-investment property) to the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee in place of the Finance Committee	Governance Review
58(1) (Leasehold Disposals / Surrender)	Thresholds dictating approval required by Committee of leasehold disposals/surrenders (City Fund and City's Cash) revised in line with the Scheme of Delegation as approved by Court in December 2021	Scheme of Delegations alignment
58(1) (Leasehold Disposals / Surrender)*	The Committees that have the responsibility for approving the disposals/surrender of leaseholds corrected in line with the new Governance Structure	Governance Review
58(1)(a) (Leasehold Disposals / Surrender)	Increase on the threshold for lettings periods to 30 years or less for officer delegation, as agreed through the Scheme of Delegation review.	Scheme of Delegations alignment

58(1)(b) (Leasehold Disposals / Surrender)	For lettings - distinctions made for anticipated premium receipt and the corresponding required approvals for the three funds: City Fund and City's Cash.	BHE Review
58(1)(b) (Leasehold Disposals / Surrender)*	Authority to approve the grant any lease at less than full rack rental value for a period of 175 years or less shall, for City Fund and City's Cash non-investment property, lie with the Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee in place of the Finance Committee.	Governance Review
58(1)(c) (Leasehold Disposals / Surrender)	For lettings - distinctions made for anticipated premium receipt and the corresponding required approvals for Bridge House Estates.	BHE Review
58(1)(d)	Adding clarification that the granting of long leases for a peppercorn rent without a premium, where there are no additional financial implications, for example, leases for substations with UKPN, will be approved as per the Scheme of Delegations to officers.	Scheme of Delegations alignment
59(1) (Variations)	In the context of seeking minor variations to the terms of ground lease restructurings, disposals, acquisitions and other transactions, or to leases being taken by the City Corporation as tenant, specific reference has been added to confirm that this be the position whether acting as a trustee of Bridge House Estates or otherwise.	BHE Review
59(2) (Variations)	Revisions have been made to the threshold for approval (for variations to the terms of an existing lease, tenancy, licence or other agreement) revised in line with the Scheme of Delegations changes, as approved by Court in December 2021.	Scheme of Delegations alignment
59(2) (Variations)	This change relates to the distinct paths of approval for variations to the terms of an existing lease, tenancy, licence or other agreement relating to a property, stipulated for City Fund/City's Cash and for Bridge House Estates.	BHE Review
60 (Disposals subject to planning agreements)	In the context of land held by the City of London Corporation as freeholder approved for redevelopment, specific reference has been added to confirm that this be the position whether acting as a trustee of Bridge House Estates or otherwise added.	BHE Review

61 (Employee Handbook)	An amendment has been made to reflect change of name of the Establishment Committee to the Corporate Services Committee.	Clarification / correction
62(2) (Officers)	A clarification has been made to ensure it is understood the provision extends to Aldermen as well as Common Councillors.	Clarification / correction
62(3) (Officers)	An amendment has been made to reflect change of name of the Establishment Committee to the Corporate Services Committee.	Clarification / correction
63(1) (Appointments)	A minor amendment has been made to refer more clearly to the City Corporation.	Clarification / correction
63(2) (Appointments – Deputy Chief Officers)	Although no change is proposed here, it should be highlighted that this may need re-examination and amendment in due course following the completion of the Target Operating Model changes.	N/A (highlighted for completeness)
64(1)(c) (Disciplinary Action)	An amendment has been made to reflect the change of name of the Establishment Committee to the Corporate Services Committee.	Governance Review
64(6) (Disciplinary Action)	A change has been made to reflect that the "relevant independent person" appointed to the Statutory Officer Review Panel will be from the Independent Appeals Committee, following the abolition of the Standards Committee.	Governance Review
64(7) (Disciplinary Action)	Updated reference from the Police Committee to the City of London Police Authority Board, as it is now known.	Clarification / correction
64(7) (Disciplinary Action)	This wording has been altered to reflect the changes to the Standards regime.	Governance Review
64(9) (Disciplinary Action)	This simply reflects updated referencing within the Standing Orders	Clarification / correction

TABLE 2: Amendments proposed which do not arise as a consequence of the Governance Review

2 (Suspension of SOs)	Your Policy & Resources Committee is minded that a higher threshold than a simple majority should be required to suspend specific Standing Orders, and proposes that an amendment be made to require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.
9(4)(b) (Referral of Reports – urgency referrals)	Members have expressed disquiet at the late circulation of information prior to meetings, particularly where there is insufficient time to digest documents. Your Policy & Resources Committee, therefore, proposes a modest amendment to bring the deadline for urgent referrals forward to 12noon the day before the Court (i.e., 24 hours earlier). This is in view of the fact that the current deadline of 12noon on the day of Court itself would render it impractical for the report to be circulated and read by Members in advance of considering the item.
10(3) (Ballots – physical or digital)	<p>Members will recall that, during the Covid period, ballots for appointments to committees / outside bodies were undertaken electronically prior to Court meetings, with ballot papers issued shortly after the Summons and allowing Members several days to complete and submit them. The results were announced prior and the Court then appointments made at the meeting on the basis of the outcomes. This had the advantage of meaning that the will of the whole Court was known (rather than just those able to be present on the day), whilst also saving time taken up by balloting at Court meetings themselves.</p> <p>Your Committee therefore proposes that the Court should now move on a more permanent basis to undertake ballots digitally and in advance of meetings (where able), rather than the default of paper ballots in Court itself.</p>
10(4) (Ballots – different voting arrangements)	Your Policy & Resources Committee considered the voting systems currently employed for both single and multiple vacancies, as set out under this Standing Order. Ultimately, it considered that there was no need to alter arrangements and thus no change is proposed.

10(5) (Ballots – Term Allocation)	Your Policy & Resources Committee proposes an amendment so that, in circumstances where varying terms are being allocated on the basis of seniority / votes received, discretion should be provided to allow for the allocations to be re-arranged if all successful candidates are in agreement. It was noted that this could be beneficial in situations where someone anticipating standing down from the Court in the next year or two would otherwise be awarded the longer term.
11(3) (Motions – time limits)	<p>The Policy & Resources Committee noted that the Mover of a Motion is currently afforded 10 minutes to open and another 10 to close debate, which they reflected felt somewhat excessive, particularly given the overall time allocation for Motions is 60 minutes.</p> <p>Therefore, a reduction is proposed to a maximum of 7 minutes each to open and close would provide greater opportunity for wider debate by the Court whilst still representing a sufficiently lengthy period for the Mover to make their points.</p>
11(4) (Motions - Amendments)	<p>Your Policy & Resources Committee recommends that a subsection should be inserted to provide for notice of any amendments intended to be moved. This would be intended to allow for wording to be made available in advance and inform debate (other than those which are consequential upon matters arising from the debate and so flow naturally from it / could not have been pre-empted).</p> <p>In the event that Amendments are proposed within the meeting (arising from debate), there should be a pause to allow for these to be handed to the Town Clerk in writing, so that they can be read out and / or shown on a screen (or otherwise made clear), in order to provide absolute clarity to both Members and the public what is being debated and voted on.</p>
11(11) (Adjournment)	Your Policy & Resources Committee considered that it would be prudent to include provision for the Lord Mayor to adjourn the Court immediately, for a specified period, so as to avoid unnecessary delay (for instance, where the Fire Alarm is sounded and a swift evacuation is necessary, such as in March 2016).

<p>12(4) (Motions – urgency)</p>	<p>As with urgent referrals, your Policy & Resources Committee considers that an earlier deadline would be beneficial in ensuring that there is time for the Lord Mayor to consider properly the grounds for urgency and the Motion’s validity, as well as to ensure the Motion can be circulated and made known to Members and the public in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>It is, therefore, proposed to bringing the deadline forward to 9.00am on the day of Court (i.e., three hours earlier than the current 12noon), which would provide a short additional window within which to facilitate this greater transparency of process.</p>
<p>12(5) (Motions – withdrawal)</p>	<p>Lord Lisvane proposed that the ability of the Mover and Seconder to withdraw a Motion should be removed without the consent of the Court. Another suggestion that arose through the Governance Review process was that Standing Order should be amended to reflect that the Mover and Seconder have the ability to make amendments to the Motion at the outset, with the Court’s consent.</p> <p>Your Committee endorses both these proposals and recommends them accordingly.</p>
<p>12(6) (Motions – expiring time)</p>	<p>At present, the wording of this Standing Order means that a warning that the time limit for the consideration of Motions is being neared is only provided when moving to another Motion.</p> <p>In practice, Members have found it helpful to be informed of remaining time limits as a matter of course and so your Committee recommends altering the Standing Order such that notice is provided of remaining time automatically, as this would be beneficial in helping to manage debate.</p>
<p>13(5) (Questions – number))</p>	<p>Lord Lisvane suggested that the current facility for a Member to submit up to three questions is unduly generous and should be reduced to one per Member (down from the current three).</p> <p>Your Committee felt that a reduction to two per Member would be reasonable, but that there should be greater opportunity to ask supplementary questions.</p> <p>Therefore, it is proposed to change the number of questions a Member may submit from three down to two, whilst also increasing the number of Members who may ask supplementaries under each question from three up to four.</p>

13(13) (Questions – Policy Statement)	Your Policy & Resources Committee proposes that this sub-section to sit under SO6 instead, as it relates to a separate item to the formal “Questions” item to which the rest of Standing Order 13 refers, and so has the potential to cause confusion.
13 (Questions – Written submissions)	<p>Lord Lisvane proposed the requirement for the wording of questions to be circulated, so as to avoid lengthy preambles or a situation where the question asked on the day varies from the original posed.</p> <p>He also proposed changes in respect of the facilitation of written questions and responses in between meetings.</p> <p>Your Policy & Resources Committee endorses these proposals and recommends them to the Court.</p>
13 (Questions – Public Questions)	<p>Through discussion at the Court of Common Council in December 2021, it was asked that consideration be given to facilitating public questions.</p> <p>Such provisions are common elsewhere and normally require questions to be submitted in advance, with the questioner invited to have their question read or to ask it in person. It is normal for either a specific number or a particular time limit to be applied to help manage proceedings.</p> <p>Your Policy & Resources Committee supports the adoption of this approach and has requested that a proposed protocol be brought for consideration and adoption in the new municipal year. The Court is recommended to support this change and note that a proposed protocol will be brought for approval to facilitate its implementation, should approval be granted.</p>
14 (Divisions)	A suggestion was made that the current Standing Order is, perhaps, overly prescriptive and would benefit from re-drafting to future-proof for the possibility of electronic divisions and so on. Your Policy & Resources Committee is of the opinion that the existing wording should be truncated, linking separately to notes on different procedures for physical / hybrid / virtual meetings.

18(6)(c) (Chief Commoner – Civic Affairs Sub-Committee)	In view of the changes made in respect of committees considering hospitality and Members' privileges, your Committee sees no cause to continue with the practice of barring the Chief Commoner from chairing other bodies. Instead, it is felt that the chief should be eligible and that it be up to individual committees to determine in the usual way. The deletion of (c) is, therefore, proposed.
18 (Chief Commoner – casual vacancy)	Your Policy & Resources Committee proposes that a new sub-section should be added, to reflect arrangements for any vacancy which might arise (for instance, through a resignation from the Court or death in service). In such circumstances, it has been the convention that the Immediate Past Chief steps into the role for the interim period, until such time as a new Chief Commoner (or Chief Commoner designate) is elected by the Court. With the Court's support, this will be incorporated moving forwards.
20 (Petitions)	<p>Your Policy & Resources Committee has observed that current wording is unhelpfully ambiguous and would benefit from a summary of the process being set out (i.e., that petitions are referred by the Court on to the relevant Committee(s) for further consideration). This is recommended, accordingly.</p> <p>As a longer-term consideration, your Committee has also indicated a desire to consider whether a process for electronic petitions, with a considered threshold to require a debate, might be explored (similar to what is in place for the House of Commons), so as to facilitate greater public engagement.</p>
25(2) (Vacancies – Process)	<p>Your Policy & Resources Committee is minded that changes to formalise the process of notification and appointment would be beneficial, to provide clarity around process as well as to facilitate the Court's recommendations around "making best use of talent" agreed in December 2021.</p> <p>If the Court is supportive, it is proposed that an amendment be inserted to regularise the time periods for notice and nominations.</p>
26 (Terms of Reference)	<p>Lord Lisvane identified this Standing Order as unnecessary / superfluous and recommended its removal. Your Policy & Resources Committee endorses this view.</p> <p>Subject to the Court's consent it will, therefore, be deleted.</p>

28 (Joint Committees)	<p>As identified by Lord Lisvane, the current SO is confused and refers to Joint Meetings of Committees rather than Joint Committees in the more generally understood local authority sense.</p> <p>As suggested by Lord Lisvane, given the intent of the SO is almost certainly to refer to Joint Meetings (as are used from time-to-time at the Corporation), it is proposed by your Policy & Resources Committee that this be re-worded to reflect an accurate position.</p> <p>Subject to the Court's confirmation that they are happy for a revised SO to reflect this position, the wording will be clarified accordingly.</p>
29(1)(e) (Chairs – meeting cancellation / rescheduling)	<p>Throughout the Governance Review process, several Members reflected on the need to move away from cancelling or changing the date or time of scheduled meetings due to changes to the Chair's availability, citing the role of the Deputy Chair in filling in on such occasions.</p> <p>Your Committee supports the addition of some advisory wording to help emphasise this point.</p>
31(8) (Ward Reception Committees)	<p>The Policy & Resources Committee proposes a minor adjustment should be made to the current Standing Order (which prohibits an individual from chairing more than one Ward Reception Committee), to provide for the possibility for an exception where there is a specific reason - for instance, a Member with exceedingly close connections with the country or Head of State in question. This should be reserved for the Ward Reception Committee itself to determine democratically.</p>
35(3) (<i>Attendance</i>)	<p>Your Policy & Resources Committee noted the particular sensitivities associated with the discussion of certain confidential items, such as those where a committee is considering staffing matters relating to named or identifiable members of staff, or where information has been provided in confidence by the Royal Household or Her Majesty's Government.</p> <p>Your Committee recommends that attendance by non-members of relevant committees during the consideration of such items should be at the Chair's discretion, consistent with the principles in respect of access to information set out at Standing Order 45.</p> <p>Clarification should also be provided in respect of inability to attend the private deliberations of Licensing Sub-Committees when they are coming to their determinations.</p>

36(1) (Quorum)	<p>Lord Lisvane proposed that a general quorum provision be inserted (for instance, 33% or similar). However, your Policy & Resources Committee noted that there would be specific considerations with some committees which would cause challenges with a uniform application (for instance, where there need to be specific representatives beyond a simple number of people present, e.g., the Local Govt Pensions Board, which requires at least one Employee Representative and Scheme Manager Representative).</p> <p>Noting the difficulties and the confusions that might arise, your Committee recommends no change at this time.</p>
38 (Decisions)	<p>Lord Lisvane proposed providing the option for Members to call for a recorded vote on decision items in Committee meetings (akin to a Division at the Court).</p> <p>Your Policy & Resources Committee supports this proposal, with it recommended that provision should be made within Standing Orders and the “division” to be subject to the support of 20% of Committee Members present.</p>
42 (Conferences)	<p>Your Policy & Resources Committee noted that this reference is somewhat outdated and the requirements are all captured within the Business Travel Scheme and Financial Regulations, so the existing entry is superfluous.</p> <p>It is, therefore, recommended that this entry be revised to simply refer to the relevant documents.</p>

**Standing Orders marked with an asterisk have been drafted pursuant to the decisions taken by the Court in December 2021 to set up a new Operational Property and Projects Sub-Committee and consistent with the direction to streamline and delegate relevant decisions making powers to said sub-committee.*

TABLE 3: Items discussed where no proposal is made, but the view of the Court is sought.

9(4)(a) (Referral of Reports - threshold)	<p>This point of consideration reflects recent concerns expressed by some Members in relation to the referral of a planning application.</p> <p>Whilst the referral mechanism is a useful one and the Court must retain the ability to exercise sovereignty on issues Members consider of importance, questions were raised as to whether it should be permissible for planning applications to be referred to the Court. Your Policy & Resources Committee is of the opinion that this should not be debated further at this stage and that further deliberations should take place as part of the wider discussions on planning governance in due course.</p> <p>Your Committee also considered whether it would be desirable to implement a modest increase in the number of signatories required (currently 20), so that there is a greater confidence that anything escalated is of significance to a substantial proportion of the Court. A range of views were expressed and no consensus emerged.</p> <p>Separately, it was suggested that wording might be included for the sake of clarity to reflect the fact that it is not permissible to refer Licensing determinations to the Court (due to the parameters of separate legislation which supersede Standing Orders).</p>
12(2) (Motions - threshold)	<p>As with referrals above, there was some discussion in relation to thresholds and the suggestion that the current number of signatories required (10) is a relatively low proportion of the Court.</p> <p>Again, there was discussion as to whether an increase would be desirable, to ensure Motions for debate are on matters which reflect the views of a sufficient number of the Court, but no consensus position emerged.</p> <p>The view was also expressed that, in relation to all thresholds, an upper limit should be implemented such that the number of signatories required is the precise number submitted.</p>

37 (Conduct of Debate)	A suggestion was made during the Governance Review process that Members may wish to consider whether there should be a limit on number of occasions on which an individual can speak to any one item in committees, akin to the arrangements for the conduct of debate at Court (where each Member is permitted to speak twice on any motion). Your Policy & Resources Committee did not come to a conclusion on this matter and makes no recommendation thereon.
40 (Duration)	Through the Governance Review process, several Members expressed dissatisfaction with the duration of some meetings which required prolonged extension. The suggestion was, therefore, made that the Court might wish to consider limiting the time by which a meeting may be extended (for instance, by a maximum of 30 minutes). Your Policy & Resources Committee did not come to a conclusion on this matter and makes no recommendation thereon.

15. Corporate & Strategic Implications

- **Strategic implications** – These changes will facilitate efficiencies in the delivery of the City of London Corporation Strategy.
- **Financial and Resource implications** – the move towards more efficient processes will inevitably lead towards reduced costs of bureaucracy and facilitate associated contributions to Target Operating Model and Fundamental Review savings. For instance, expedited processes will lead to a reduction in costs associated with delays to approvals; a lesser volume of time spent by officers in producing reports for low-level items and presenting them to multiple committees will also release capacity within the workforce. A reduced central administration burden (through devolving support responsibilities in certain areas) will also provide for flexibility within the Committee & Member Services team to realign service output and requirements
- **Legal implications** – the changes proposed in this report, if agreed by the Court of Common Council, will legally change internal organisational administrative procedures and regulate the conduct of meetings at the City of London Corporation.
- **Risk implications** – as with any process of significant change, there are risks associated with implementation and unforeseen challenges as the new system embeds. The approval of a post-implementation review, to identify and address any such issues, will be an important mitigating factor.
- **Equalities implications** – Under the Equality Act 2010, all public bodies have a duty to ensure that when exercising their functions they have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and to take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people and encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low. The proposals contained in this report do not have any potential negative impact on a particular group of people based on their protected characteristics.
- **Climate implications** - The proposals included in this paper do not carry any significant implications for the Climate Action programme.
- **Security implications** – None

Conclusion

16. It is recommended that the Court endorses the various consequential meetings as set out in Table 1 and Appendix 1 of this report, in order that a substantial part of the Governance Review recommendations can be progressed and delivered. The Court is also asked to support your Policy & Resources Committee's several recommendations for further amendments as outlined in Table 2, and to instruct the Town Clerk to make such change as required to give effect to their implementation. Finally, Members are also invited to consider those items set out at Table 3, with a view to determining whether the Court would wish to make changes or maintain the status quo.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Standing Orders with tracked changes

All of which we submit to the judgement of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 28th day of February 2022.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Chair, Policy and Resources Committee