

Report – Policy and Resources Committee

Appointment process for Deputy Chair/Vice Chairs of the Policy and Resources Committee (Standing Order No.30(8))

To be presented on Thursday, 21st April 2022

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

SUMMARY

In December 2021, the Court of Common Council agreed a number of matters arising from the comprehensive Governance Review undertaken over the preceding period. One of the decisions taken was that the Policy and Resources Committee should move away from the practice of having one Deputy Chair and two Vice Chairs and should, instead, revert to the previous practice of having a single designated Deputy Chair.

However, in March 2022, when considering the implications of the December 2021 decisions in respect of changes to Standing Orders, the Court reconsidered its position on this matter. Following debate, it was felt that it would be preferable to retain the previous arrangements (i.e., having one Deputy and two Vice Chairs).

In keeping with the Court's determination, your Policy and Resources Committee (at its 17 March 2022 meeting) noted the Court's desire to retain existing arrangements and proposed a minor modification to the election process for the Deputy / Vice Chairs, to provide for a simpler and more transparent process of election. In particular, it was observed that the current process simply saw the selection of three Vice Chairs, with it left to the Chair and the three Vices to determine amongst themselves who should become Deputy Chair (i.e., the senior of the three). This was felt to be defective and insufficiently democratic, with it argued that it would be preferable to hold two separate ballots, one to elect a Deputy Chair and one to elect two Vices, so as to ensure the appointments are made democratically and in accordance with the full Committee's desires.

Your Policy and Resources Committee hereby seeks the support of the Court of Common Council to effect this change to process, via an amendment to Standing Order 30(8).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Court of Common Council is **recommended** to approve an amendment to Standing Order No. 30(8), governing the protocol for the election of Deputy Chairs of the Policy and Resources Committee, as set out in Appendix 1, such that:-

- The Committee shall continue to elect three Deputy/Vice Chairs, with one of these appointments being designated as Deputy Chair to exercise the formal responsibilities of this role and the remaining two designated as Vice Chairs;
- The elections for these posts should now be managed via two separate ballots, with the election of Deputy Chair to be undertaken first before moving on to a second ballot and the election of two Vice Chairs.

MAIN REPORT

Background

1. In December 2021, the Court of Common Council determined various new governance arrangements, following a comprehensive Governance Review process.
2. One of the decisions taken was to dispense with the arrangement whereby there are three Deputy Chairs of the Policy and Resources Committee, with it agreed that the Committee should revert to having a single designated Deputy Chair.
3. However, in March 2022, when considering consequential changes required to Standing Orders (to give effect to the decisions taken through the Governance Review process), a proposal was made that this specific decision should be reversed and the Court agreed that the Policy and Resources Committee should continue with the arrangement of electing three Deputy Chairs (of which, one was then selected to serve as Deputy Chair and two as Vice Chairs).

Effectiveness of Arrangements and Proposal

4. Your Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 17 March 2022, noted the will of the Court on this matter but highlighted minor concerns in relation to the process by which these posts are appointed to.
5. Under the existing arrangements, the Committee simply elects three individuals, with it then left to the Chair (in consultation with the three elected to office) to determine which of them will be designated as the formal Deputy Chair, with the remaining two being Vice Chairs.
6. Your Policy and Resources Committee is of the opinion that this runs the risk of the Committee's preferred candidate not being appointed as the Deputy Chair.
7. Therefore, it is proposed that a simpler and more transparent process would be to hold two separate ballots: one to elect a Deputy Chair, followed by a second to elect two Vice Chairs. This would ensure the will of the Committee was known, and with support for the Deputy Chair being clear.
8. Amendments to Standing Order No.30 would be required to give effect to this proposal. These are set out in Appendix 1.

Conclusion

9. The Policy and Resources Committee has a unique Standing Order provision for the manner in which its Deputy Chair and Vice Chairs are elected.
10. In order to improve the process of election and ensure the formal Deputy Chair enjoys the support of the Committee, your Policy and Resources Committee hereby seeks the approval of the Court of Common Council to amend Standing Order No. 30(8) such that the election of one Deputy Chair and two Vice Chairs are managed separately.

All of which we submit to the judgment of this Honorable Court.

DATED this 17th day of March, 2022.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Catherine McGuinness
Chair, Policy and Resources Committee

Proposed Revised Standing Order No. 30(8)

8. The election of the three Deputy/Vice Chairs/Chairmen of the Policy and Resources Committee shall be undertaken as follows:-

(a) The election of a Deputy Chair shall be undertaken first, as follows:-

- Where the number of candidates is less than or matches the number of vacancies (i.e., one) the candidate will automatically be treated as being elected to office.
- In the event of a contest, the names of those who are willing to serve will be voted on by ballot. The successful candidate will require a majority of the votes cast. In the absence of any candidate achieving a majority of votes in the first round of voting:
 - the candidate with the fewest votes will be eliminated;
 - if there is more than one candidate securing the fewest but identical number of votes, then a ballot will be held between those candidates to determine which will drop out;
 - candidates may also elect to withdraw at this stage;
 - a further ballot will be held amongst the remaining candidates and the procedure above repeated until one candidate has obtained a majority of the votes cast.

(b) For the election of two Vice Chairs:-

- Where the number of candidates is less than or matches the number of vacancies (i.e., two) the candidates will automatically be treated as being elected to office.
- Where there are more candidates than vacancies, a ballot will be undertaken with Members indicating their preferred candidate(s). Members can choose not to vote for the maximum number of candidates.
- Once votes have been cast and counted, any candidate having 50% or more of the number of votes will be elected.
- Unless the candidates each secure 50% of the vote, the candidate with the least number of votes will drop-out automatically. If there is more than one candidate securing the least but identical number of votes then a ballot will be held between those candidates to

determine which one will drop-out. Other candidates may also elect to withdraw at this stage.

- A further ballot will be held amongst the remaining candidates and any candidate securing 50% or more of the vote will be elected. This process will be repeated until all vacancies are filled.
- There may come a point in the process where a candidate or candidates with the least number of votes drops out, leaving a number of candidates that matches the number of vacancies. In those circumstances, no further ballot is necessary as the candidates will automatically be treated as being elected to office (without having to secure 50% of the vote).