

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE OF ALDERMEN
Tuesday, 6 September 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held at
Aldermen's Court Room, Mezzanine Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 6
September 2022 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Alderman Sir William Russell (Chairman)
Alderman Sir Charles Bowman (Deputy Chairman)
The Rt Hon. The Lord Mayor Vincent Keaveny
Alderman Ian David Luder
Alderman Sir David Wootton
Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley
Alderman Sir Peter Estlin
Alderman Nicholas Lyons
Alderman Alison Gowman
Alderman Timothy Hailes
Alderman Professor Michael Mainelli
Alderman Robert Howard
Alderman and Sheriff Alastair King DL
Alderman Gregory Jones KC
Alderman Prem Goyal
Alderman Professor Emma Edhem
Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney
Alderman Bronek Masojada
Alderman Alexander Barr
Alderman Tim Levene
Alderwoman Jennette Newman

Officers:

John Barradell	- Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Rhiannon Leary	- Executive Officer to the Court of Aldermen
Gemma Stokley	- Town Clerk's Department
Michael Cogher	- Comptroller and City Solicitor
Paul Double	- City Remembrancer
Bob Roberts	- Deputy Town Clerk
Sonia Virdee	- Chamberlain's Department
Marcelle Moncrieffe	- Executive Director & Chief People Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Alderwoman Langley and Alderman Christopher Makin.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 5 July 2022.

RESOLVED: - That the minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 5 July 2022 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. **ALDERMANIC APPOINTMENTS**

The Chairman took the opportunity to update the Committee on various changes to Aldermanic Appointments since their last meeting.

It was reported that Alderwoman Newman would be appointed to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee in the room of Alderman David Graves. Alderman Christopher Makin was to be appointed to the Committee of Aldermen to administer the Sir William Coxen Trust Fund in the room of Alderman John Garbutt and Alderman Vincent Keaveny was to be appointed to Gresham (City Side) Committee in the room of Alderman John Garbutt.

It was reported that there was still an Aldermanic vacancy to be appointed to in the room of Alderwoman Susan Langley on the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee and also a vacancy for Emanuel School in the room of Alderman David Graves. These would be reconsidered following the results of the two forthcoming September Aldermanic elections.

RESOLVED – That the appointments reported be approved.

5. **RECRUITMENT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief People Officer outlining the proposed process for the recruitment to the Town Clerk & Chief Executive post.

The Chief People Officer highlighted that the report contained a schedule for the recruitment timetable as well as details of an Assessment Centre process and the Interview Panel composition. It was reported that the Job Description and Person Specification had been revised in consultation with Members with the report requesting that any further, minor changes that may be required be delegated to Officers. It was confirmed that the advert for this position was now live and had been advertised across a number of different mediums including print media and also online. It was reported that the advert had already generated a lot of interest to date.

An Alderman questioned the makeup of the proposed Interview Panel and the diversity of this. The Chief People Officer commented that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee representative was still yet to be appointed but was of the view that the Panel was diverse in terms of gender and ethnicity. She highlighted that she would also be in attendance at these

interviews. The Alderman questioned whether those Chairman on the Panel were able to appoint a representative from their respective Committees to further diversify the Panel make up. The Chief People Officer stated that she would be happy to take this forward as a suggestion but that the decision would be at the Chairmen's discretion.

Another Aldermen recognised that the report set out the disadvantages of not having a final decision taken on the appointment until the Court of Common Council meeting in December 2022. He highlighted that there was a date in diaries for an informal meeting of the Court in November and questioned whether a formal meeting might be held immediately before this for the sole purpose of confirming the appointment of the Town Clerk and Chief Executive, thereby expediting the process by four weeks, recognising that most applicants were likely to have a notice period of at least three months. Secondly, the Aldermen stated that, historically, when Chief Officers had been appointed by the Court of Common Council, there had been scope for questions from Members. He questioned whether it might therefore be possible for Members to write into the Lord Mayor of Chief People Officer with any questions which they might like to pose to the applicant in public session. This would allow for any inappropriate questions to be screened ahead of the meeting and also allow for any duplication to be offset. The Chief People Officer commented that, with regard to the timetable, it was recognised that an appointment on 8 December was relatively late in the day but highlighted that she had taken advice on this. That being said, she stated that she would be happy to seek further advice on this and the proposal to hold a formal meeting on 10 November for this purpose. She also undertook to seek advice as to the possibility of Members posing questions of the applicant at the Court of Common Council meeting.

An Alderman commented on the Job Description and questioned why there was not greater prominence of risk management/mitigation experience given the complexity of the Corporation. He added that he felt that there should also be explicit reference to significant financial budget oversight and operating performance responsibility in the experience requirements. Finally, he suggested that it would also be helpful to see reference to the Corporation's net zero aspirations and commercial property within the experience requirements.

An Alderman returned to the issue of diversity in terms of not only the Panel but also the application process more generally. He questioned whether factors such as the sexual orientation, mental/physical health and social mobility of candidates would also be captured and taken into account. The Chief People Officer reported that a tender process to select the head-hunters being used for this process included very clear criteria around their approach to diversity and inclusion. Those selected had been able to cite a number of examples of their approach to this at short-listing and long-listing stage as well as at interview stage and on selection. She reported that they did adopt an approach where there was an equality, diversity and inclusion form to be completed by all candidates however it was emphasised that the provision of this information was voluntary. Where this data was provided by applicants, comprehensive profiling took place, but this was anonymised in so far as possible. The Committee were informed that social mobility was also taken into consideration

and that there were questions posed to draw out this type of information on candidates. Whilst the process would culminate in candidates appearing before a Member led Panel, it was highlighted that it also included a comprehensive Officer Assessment Centre which would be made up of a number of diverse Officers from across the organisation.

Another Alderman questioned whether those on the Member Panel and Officer Assessment Centre would receive training in diversity and inclusion. The Chief People Officer confirmed that she was currently in the process of arranging recruitment training for all which would also incorporate diversity and inclusion and would take place ahead of any assessment or interview process.

RESOLVED - That the Committee:

- Agree to the recruitment timetable as outlined in this report;
- Agree to the Assessment Centre process as outlined in this report;
- Agree to the Interview Panel as outlined in this report;
- Agree the job description and person specification as attached to this report;
- Delegate minor changes to the Assessment Centre process and Interview Panel where necessary to the Chair and Deputy Chair of the proposed Interview Panel;
- Delegate minor changes to the Job Description and Person Specification where necessary to the Chair and Deputy Chair of the proposed Interview Panel

6. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS LIST

The Committee considered the Outstanding Actions List which had been updated since the last meeting on 5 July 2022.

The Chairman highlighted that the list would need to be revised further in due course in light of today's Strategy Morning. He requested that the Executive Director and Private Secretary to the Lord Mayor provide the Committee with an update on Aldermanic clothing allowance at their next meeting.

RESOLVED: - That –

- (i) the Outstanding Actions List be noted; and
- (ii) that completed items be removed from the list.

7. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

Access to Wardmotes

The Chairman noted that the Comptroller and City Solicitor had circulated a note to all on this matter after a question on it had been raised by one of the Aldermen. The Comptroller and City Solicitor remarked that there was a tension here between transparency and what the actual purpose of these Wardmote meetings was. He added that, if they were to be opened up further then there were certain risks and other factors such as the amount of space available at certain venues and access/security arrangements that would also need to be taken into account. He added that this had not tended to be an issue previously and that people were generally granted access to Wardmotes in a proportionate and controlled way.

Honorary Benchers

In keeping with the previous Chairman's practice of acknowledging new positions and accolades, the Chairman to congratulate Alderman Michael Mainelli on the unanimous decision of the benchers of the Middle Temple to elect him as an Honorary Benchers of the Inn.

The Chairman asked all Aldermen to keep him informed of any new positions/accolades of their own so that they might also be brought to the attention of the Committee going forward.

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There were no additional, urgent items of business for consideration.

9. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC RESOLVED** - That, in accordance with the Court of Aldermen's Disclosure Arrangement (Standing Order 25), the public shall be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen have determined, having had due regard to the Disclosure Arrangement, that disclosure should not be permitted.

10. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 5th July 2022.

RESOLVED: - That the non-public minutes of the last meeting of the General Purposes Committee of Aldermen held on 5th July 2022 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

11. **ALDERMANIC QUALIFICATIONS - CHECKS**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Comptroller and City Solicitor setting out a proposal for the introduction of checks in relation to Aldermanic qualifications as requested by the Committee at its meeting on 5th July 2022.

12. **ALDERMANIC QUALIFICATIONS - FOREIGN CONVICTIONS**

The Committee considered a report of the Comptroller and City Solicitor setting out options and issues in relation to the risk of an Alderman with a relevant foreign conviction being elected.

13. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions received in the non-public sessions.

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

The Committee discussed the Aldermanic Mess Fund.

The meeting ended at 11.57 am

Chairman

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