

CIVIC AFFAIRS SUB-COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 25 October 2023

Minutes of the meeting of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee held at Committee Room,
West Wing, 2nd Floor Guildhall on Wednesday, 25 October 2023 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Tom Sleigh (Chair)
Tijs Broeke
Deputy Henry Colthurst
Deputy Peter Dunphy
Deputy Shravan Joshi
Deputy Andrien Meyers
Alderman Sir William Russell
James St John Davis

In attendance (observing online)

Emily Benn
Giles Shilson

Officers:

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| Paul Double | - Remembrancer |
| Paul Wright | - Deputy Remembrancer |
| Amy Austin | - Remembrancer's Department |
| Rachel Cartwright | - Remembrancer's Department |
| Leann Corachea | - Remembrancer's Department |
| Fiona Hoban | - Remembrancer's Department |
| Polly Dunn | - Assistant Town Clerk and Executive Director of Governance and Member Services |
| Katie Davies | - Town Clerk's Department |
| Ben Dunleavey | - Town Clerk's Department |
| Mark Gettleson | - Town Clerk's Department |
| Christopher Rumbles | - Town Clerk's Department |
| Jen Beckermann | - Executive Director and Private Secretary to the Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee |
| Emily Slatter | - Office of the Executive Director and Private Secretary to the Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee |

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the Chief Commoner, Simon Duckworth, and Wendy Mead.

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

There were none.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that – the public minutes of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee meeting on 13 July 2023 be approved as an accurate record.

4. **REVIEW OF OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk providing an update on current outside bodies on which the City Corporation was represented and seeking to establish whether the link to these remained valid and whether the appointments continued to support the City Corporation's current aims and objectives.

During the discussion that followed there was agreement that the list of outside bodies required updating, with certain outside bodies showing that had been wound up, different appointment processes for each and the list appearing out of date. There would be a need to contact each outside body to understand their requirements moving forwards. A Member added how the City Corporation should be looking to add value when appointing to an outside body, understanding where there were gaps in experience and knowledge and looking to appoint an appropriate individual with relevant experience. Working more closely with each outside body in looking to achieve this.

A Member questioned the attendance rate of Members appointed to outside bodies and whether City Corporation representatives were making a contribution and adding value, with there being a need to understand this. It was noted that a number of the outside body appointments were historical, with the City Corporation retaining appointment rights; it was suggested an opportunity should be taken to review these.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Reviewed the schedule of outside bodies and provided comments thereon;
- Approved a way forward to manage partnerships through making initial contact with relevant outside bodies;
- Agreed to officers carrying out further work as necessary.

5. **NEW OUTSIDE BODY - THAMES ESTUARY GROWTH BOARD**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Deputy Town Clerk relating to Thames Estuary Growth and seeking approval of their request that the City of London Corporation takes a place on their newly convened Board as a formal Corporate Member.

RESOLVED: That Members: -

- Endorsed the City of London Corporation becoming a Corporate Member of the TEGB, and for that organisation to be deemed an Outside Body of the City of London Corporation.
- Agreed for the Member who sits on the Outside Body to be the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, or nominated Deputy thereof, as requested by the Outside Body.

6. **MEMBERS' BEDROOMS POLICY**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk that was responding to a number of issues that had previously been raised relating to the Members' Bedroom Policy and presenting a revised policy for approval.

During the discussion that followed a range of views were expressed regarding the current level of charges. These included a proposal around a need to start looking to make a profit out of the bedrooms through a charging rate of cost plus 20% for Members when not on official business and cost plus 50% for non-Members, reviewing charges on an annual basis and linking future increases to consumer price inflation or having an agreed process for an increase. It was further proposed that there should be an annual review of the level of charges for the bedrooms.

A Member responded stressing a need to be mindful that not all Members were of the same financial standing. Any increase in cost could potentially impact detrimentally on certain Members and it was stressed that all Members, regardless of their financial background, should be able to afford to stay.

A further concern was raised with any proposal that the City Corporation should be looking to make a commercial profit out of the Members' Bedrooms, with many Members having a long commute and taking advantage of use of the bedrooms as a result. A further consideration was the current standard of the bedrooms, with these not currently being at the same standard as hotels in the City and not being comparable at this stage; if charges were increased to make a profit then this would likely result in an increase in what Members would expect.

There was an acknowledgement of the difference between official and non-official use, with it being suggested that where a Member was staying for non-official use it would be appropriate to look at making a profit. It was suggested changing the hours applicable for official use to those events finishing at 10.00pm or starting at 8.30am to broaden the number of Members that would be captured by official usage.

There was recognition that usage and occupancy levels were not currently presenting any issues relating to availability of bedrooms. A Member referred to the potential for bedrooms to become under-utilised should an increase in charges be applied.

The Town Clerk noted that there were clear differences of opinion on costs when considering a profit against non-profit. The Town Clerk added how in the interests of making a step forward on a policy that was last updated in 2014, if Members were content they could approve the proposal before them today. This

would then allow for further work to take place in considering issues around equality impacts, social mobility impacts, changing of timing, impacts on occupancy levels and coming back with detailed information on these points as part of a presentation of an annual review of charges at an appropriate point. This would hopefully present a helpful step forward today for Members to endorse. Members offered their endorsement of this approach.

RESOLVED: That Members:-

- Approved the updated Bedroom Rules and Eligibility document at Appendix 1;
- Approved that charges to be applied to the rooms should be £65 for a small double room and £70 for a large double room for Members; non-members to be charged £100 for a smaller double room and £125 for a large double room, with implementation of these updated charges being from 1st February 2024;
- Agreed that the Bedroom Rules and Eligibility document and charges should be reviewed on an annual basis;
- Agreed to a change of hours applicable being for those events finishing at 10.00pm or starting at 8.30am.

7. **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDERS 41(A) AND 41(B)**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Town Clerk advising Members of action taken by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, in accordance with Standing Order Nos. 41(a) and 41(b) since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: -

- That Members receive the report and note its content.

8. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

There were none.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

There were no additional items of business.

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That the public be excluded for the following matters that relate to functions of the Court of Common Council which were not subject to the provisions of Part VA and Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, relating to public access to meetings. The matters would, therefore, be considered in non-public session unless the committee determined to the contrary.

11. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the non-public minutes of the Civic Affairs Sub-Committee meeting on 13 July 2023 be approved as an accurate record.

12. **DELEGATED AUTHORITY REPORT**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Remembrancer detailing decisions taken under delegation to the Remembrancer, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair.

13. **DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY OR URGENCY POWERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDERS 41(A) AND 41(B)**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Town Clerk detailing decisions taken under delegated authority or urgency powers in accordance with standing order Nos. 41(a) and 41(b).

14. **SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE: UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Deputy Town Clerk providing an update on work relating to a Special Responsibility Allowance.

15. **APPLICATIONS FOR THE USE OF GREAT HALL**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Remembrancer presenting applications for the use of Great Hall.

16. **APPLICATIONS FOR HOSPITALITY**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Remembrancer presenting an application for hospitality.

a) Application A

17. **CITY EVENTS PROGRAMME 2024/25**

The Sub-Committee considered a report of the Remembrancer setting out the programme of recurring City-hosted events and seeking approval for such events for the 2024/25 financial year.

18. **FORTHCOMING COMMITTEE OF COURT EVENTS INVOLVING HOSPITALITY AND OTHER NON-HOSPITALITY EVENTS**

The Sub-Committee received a report of the Remembrancer providing detail of forthcoming committee or Court events involving hospitality and other non-hospitality events.

19. **SUMMARY OF COMMITTED HOSPITALITY FUNDING**

The Sub-Committee received a joint report of the Remembrancer and Chamberlain providing an update on the level of actual and committed expenditure.

20. **VARIOUS RECEPTIONS - FINAL ACCOUNTS**

The Sub-Committee received a joint report of the Remembrancer and Chamberlain comparing outturn for events overseen by the Sub-Committee against the budget.

21. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

A question was raised on the following point.

Artificial Intelligence Summit Dinner

22. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE CONSIDER SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

The following additional items of business were considered.

- Use of mobile phones at formal eventsThe Remembrancer provided an update on events in the planning pipeline
- Benefices

The meeting ended at 3.15pm

Chairman

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