

TO: **OPEN SPACES & CITY GARDENS COMMITTEE**

FROM: **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 16 March 2017

4. **APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk concerning the process for appointing chairmen of sub-committees.

The Chairman stated that the purpose of a sub-committee was to deal with matters referred to it by its parent committee. It was noted that whilst the Policy and Resources Committee was responsible for governance, without a change to standing orders, its recommendation regarding the appointment of chairmen of sub-committees was on the basis of the adoption of a convention only. Detailed discussion ensued during which the following comments were made:-

- The Chairman advised that the resolution to committees from the December meeting aimed to set a convention which enabled the Chairman of a grand committee who did not wish to chair a sub-committee to identify and nominate for the role another Member with the necessary experience and qualities, for approval of that Committee. In the interests of clarity the initial resolution would have benefited from being circulated with the substantive report.
- Members questioned the need for the convention particularly given the different nature of some committees, for example some were quasi-judicial and therefore required a different approach.
- As the intention of the convention was to clarify the process it might be better for grand committees to set out its approach to appointments in its terms of reference.
- Rather than seeking the adoption of a convention, Committees should be provided with some general guidance instead. Without being too prescriptive, could also include reference to the length of time a chairman could serve. Several Members supported this.

**RESOLVED: that the following guidance be given to all Grand Committees:**

1. **in the event of a Grand Committee having no prior arrangement or custom in place for the way in which the chairmen of its sub-committees are selected, it should be usual practice for the Chairman of the relevant Grand Committee, should they not wish to serve themselves, to nominate an individual to serve in that capacity for the approval of the Grand Committee; and**
2. **that the term of office of a chairman of a sub-committee would usually be no longer than the term of office of the Chairman of the Grand Committee e.g. three, four or five years, subject to the relevant Grand Committee being able to extend the term of the sub-committee's chairman on an annual basis.**